CHESS FOR BEGINNERS

THE COMPLETE MANUAL

TO QUICKLY DOMINATE THE GAME EVEN IF YOU HAVE NEVER MOVED A PAWN

MATT KNIGHT

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Brief Introduction

This *complete and updated guide* will allow you to acquire all the bases of the game, many general notions, and some interesting curiosities about the world of chess to achieve the first results and, over time, take some satisfaction as a true professional.

All topics are divided into a functional and intuitive way to make the information fast to learn and easy to consult, always going straight to the point, without unnecessary preambles. The most complex matters are also approached with simple explicative examples, adequately commented, and making wide use of specific diagrams.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize how every aspect of this exciting game can be endlessly explored (it will be your responsibility to continue studying) and how you do not have to be exceptionally gifted to succeed. In fact, all the abilities, including those needed in chess, can be learned and grow over time with a minimum of goodwill, perseverance, and lots of practice.

Enjoy your reading.

Multiple Benefits

Chess has distant origins; It is considered an art form and has always represented an excellent ability test. It is not only suitable for all age groups but also an intelligent way to have fun. The *benefits* derived from its practice are *countless*, and the following are the main ones:

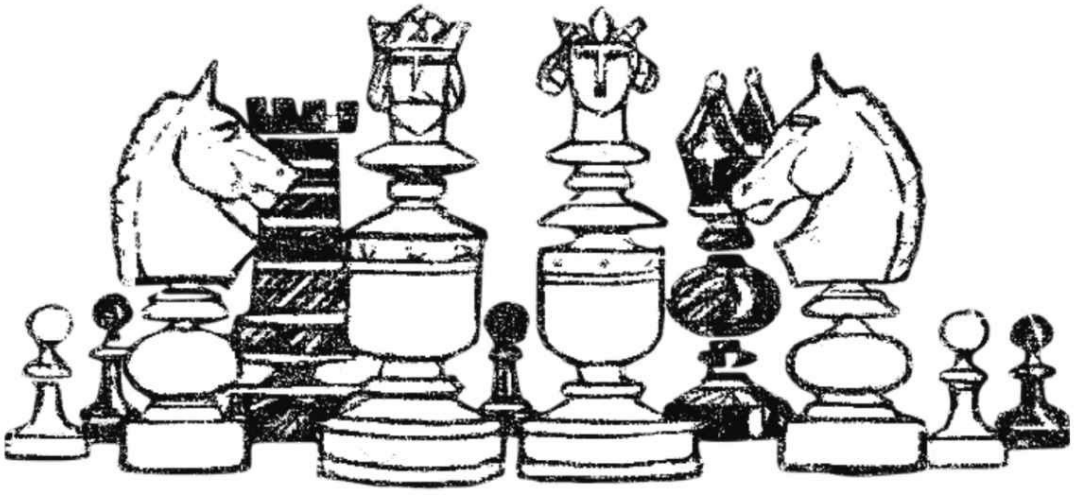
- Develops intellective and mnemonic capabilities;
- Develops concentration and visualization capability;
- Develops problem-solving and creativity capability;
- Develops autonomous and independent decision-making capability;
- Develops tactical and strategic capability;
- Develops social and confrontational ability;
- Develops self-control and self-esteem.

It thus significantly contributes to one's personal growth, also becoming a valuable aid in daily life.

"Chess is the touchstone of intellect."
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

PART I

GENERAL ASPECTS OF THE GAME



Overview

Chess (*image 1*) is a strategic game of logical ability, in which two players move 16 pieces each, white for one and black for the other, on a *chessboard* to capture the main piece of the opponent, called *king*, with a move named *checkmate*. It is one of the most popular and complex games; it can be practiced anywhere, in both recreational and competitive ways. Moreover, it is estimated that the number of possible combinations, moves, and games is extremely high, almost incalculable.

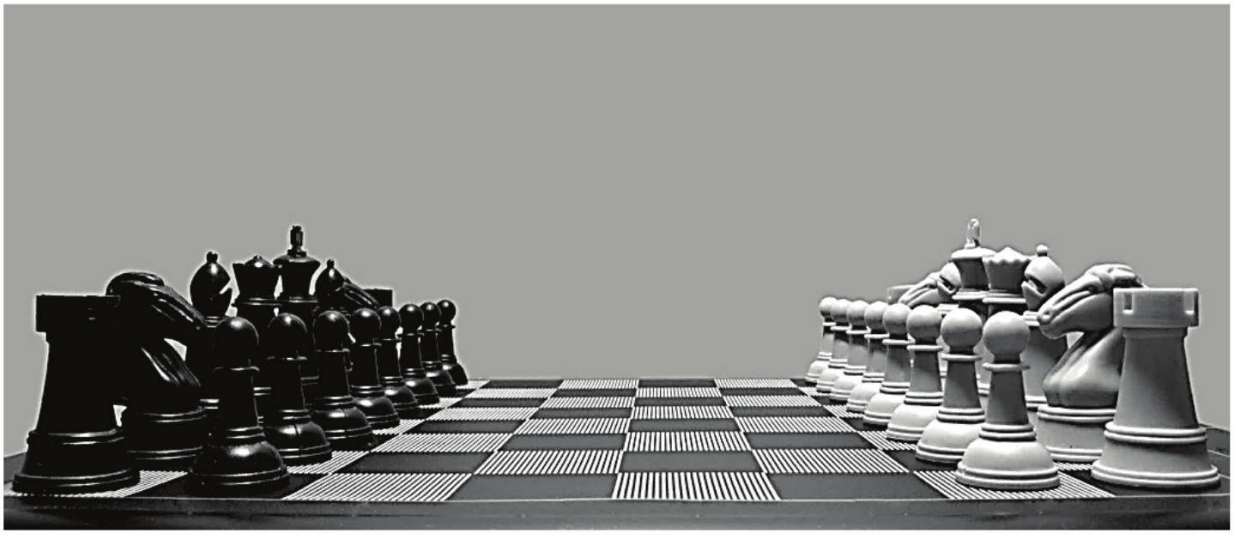


Image 1:
Example of chessboard and pieces
(chess set)

The world of chess is ruled by *FIDE* (International Chess Federation), which counts over 190 associated nations and has codified the rules for the game universally accepted.

Diagrams

In chess literature, to accompany the technical information, are typically used *diagrams* to improve the understanding of the concepts exposed and make them more usable.

A *chess diagram* is the graphical representation of a determined game position through a dedicated standard symbology that allows to easily identify the pieces of the respective players and their spatial disposition, also through a series of numbers and letters present externally to the edge of at least two sides of a stylized chessboard (*diagrams 1 and 2*). A sequence of diagrams shows the evolution of a game or one of its parts, and it is now very common to find these interactive or animated representations online. Additionally, diagrams usually have a white or black symbol placed in proximity of a corner to identify the player whose *turn* it is to move (*diagrams 3 and 4*). Under its effectiveness, this graphic system is also used for annotations, game analysis, discussions, and, more generally, to facilitate reading and study.

In this manual it was decided to include clear references within the text (highlighted in brackets) that refer to a whole series of diagrams at the end of each chapter to facilitate the reader in learning the various notions, maximizing usability.

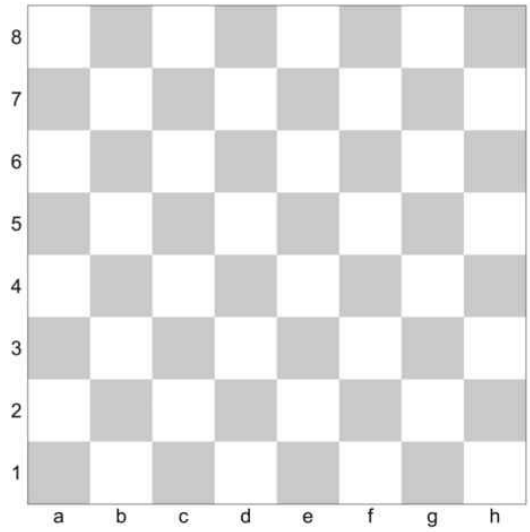


Diagram 1:
Example of stylized chessboard used for diagrams
(White's point of view and algebraic notation)

Diagram 2:
Example of position
(standard symbology)

Diagram 3:
Example of sequence of moves—1
(White's turn)

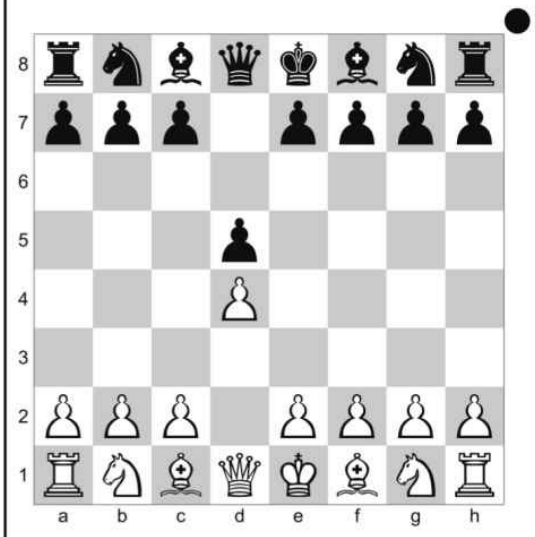


Diagram 4:
Example of sequence of moves—2
(Black's turn)

Battlefield

The *chessboard* is an essential element of the chess game and represents the battlefield between the minds of two players battling for victory. The standard version has the following characteristics:

- Is a square *board* that has (obviously) four *sides* or *edges* and four *corners*;
- Is divided into 64 *squares*, alternatively light and dark, which have the side between 2 and 2.5 inches (*diagram 5*);
- Has 32 light-colored squares, called *light* or *white squares*, and 32 dark-colored squares, called *dark* or *black squares* (*diagram 5*);
- A series of squares in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal direction is defined as *line*;
- Is organized into eight horizontal lines, named *ranks*, and eight vertical lines named *files* or, more rarely, *columns* (*diagram 6*);
- The ranks are numbered from *1* to *8* (from bottom to top);
- The ranks to extremes are also called *back ranks* (*diagram 7*);
- The files are distinguished by the letters from *a* to *h* (from left to right) and, in some circumstances, take the name of the piece that occupies them at the beginning of the game on the last rank (e.g., king's file, queen's file, rook's file, etc.);
- The two files in the center are defined as *center files* or *central files*, respectively of queen and king (*diagram 8*);
- The first three files on the left and the last three on the right are also named *flank* or *wing*, respectively of queen and king (*diagram 8*);
- The oblique lines consisting of squares of the same color touching with the vertices are called *diagonals* (*diagram 6*), divided into *light* or *white* diagonals and *dark* or *black* diagonals;
- Instead, the longest diagonals that cross in the center identify the *long diagonals* (*diagram 9*);
- The four central squares are named *center* while, more rarely, the sixteen central squares are named *expanded center* (*diagram 10*);
- The left half of the chessboard identifies the *queenside* or *queen's side*, while the right half the *kingside* or *king's side* (*diagram 11*);
- In some specific cases, using as a reference the cardinal points, the left half of the chessboard is identified as *West* while the right half as *East* (*diagram 11*);

- The lower half represents the area of the *first player* or *White* while the upper half represents the area of the *second player* or *Black* (*diagram 12*);
- Is oriented in such a way the square in the lower right corner of each player is light (instead, rotated by 90° is used to play *checkers* or *draughts*);
- The materials used are mainly wood and plastic while the colors, brown and off-white.

In competitions, the game table on which the chessboard is placed has a minimum length double the latter and a width that exceeds it by 6−8 inches.

There are also artistic chessboards used as decorative objects and travel versions that fold to hold pieces.

Recently, in the professional field, *electronic chessboards* have begun to spread, which, being equipped with sensors, can recognize the execution of the moves and automatically activate the clock. These are often used for the transmission of games on screens or online.

A particular chessboard type is the *demonstration board*, a large standing chessboard normally placed on a support. This was used in live competitions to show to the public the progress of a match in real-time and in other contexts to analyze the game and deepen certain aspects, now replaced by much more technological and practical systems.

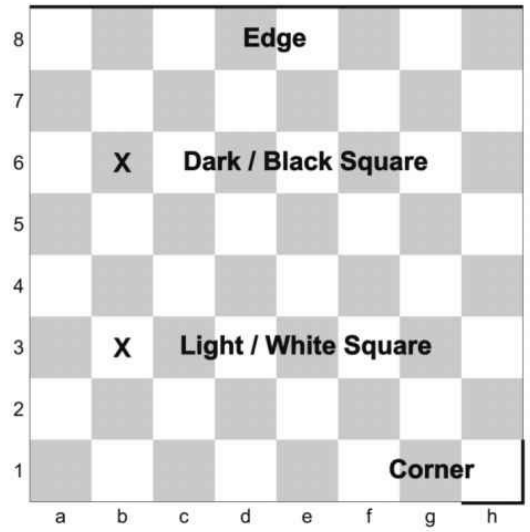


Diagram 5:
Example of squares, edge, and corner
(the two types of squares are identified by *x*)

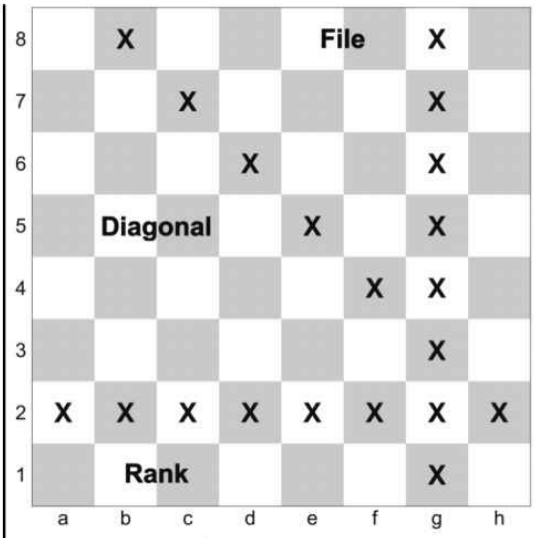


Diagram 6:
Example of rank, file, and diagonal
(*2nd* rank, *g*-file and *h2-b8* diagonal)

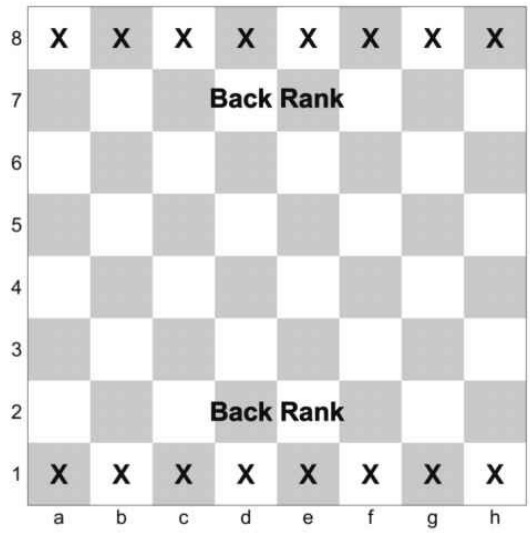


Diagram 7:
Example of back rank
(*1st* rank for White and *8th* rank for Black)

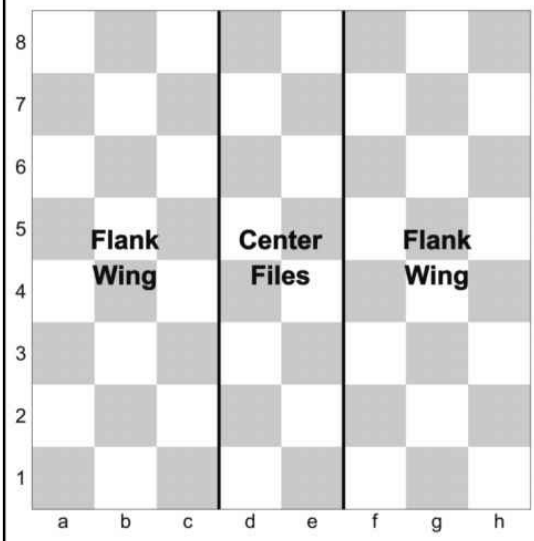


Diagram 8:
Example of center files
(*d*-, *e*-file)
and flanks/wings
(*a*-, *b*-, *c*-file and *f*-, *g*-, *h*-file)

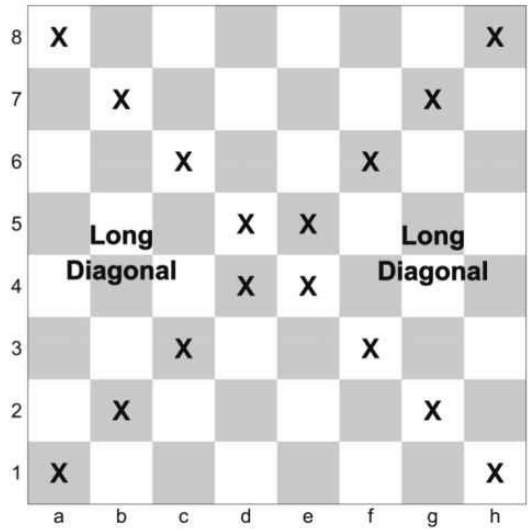


Diagram 9:
Example of long diagonals
(*a1-h8* diagonal and
h1-a8 diagonal)

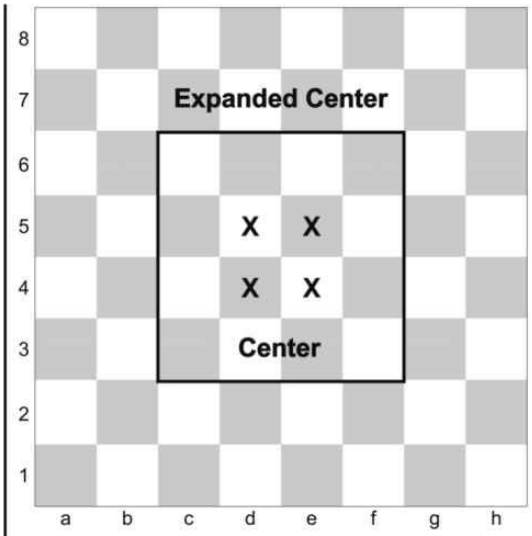


Diagram 10:
Example of center
(identified by *x*)
and expanded center
(identified by the square)

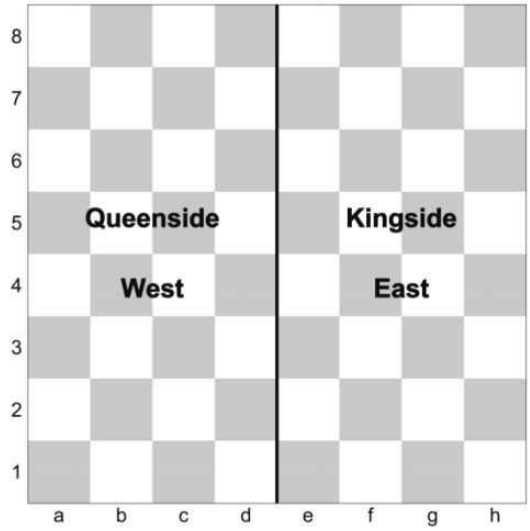


Diagram 11:
Example of queenside or West
(*a-*, *b-*, *c-*, *d-*file)
and kingside or East
(*e-*, *f-*, *g-*, *h-*file)

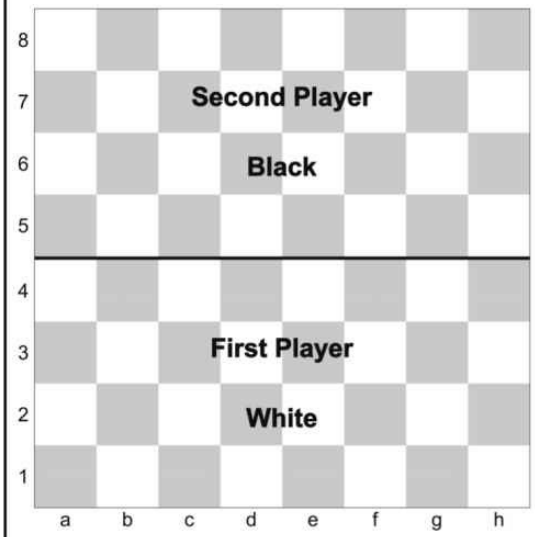


Diagram 12:
Example of area of White
(*1st*, *2nd*, *3th*, *4th* rank)
and area of Black
(*5th*, *6th*, *7th*, *8th* rank)

Army

Each player has 16 *pieces* of six different types (eight *pawns*, two *knights*, two *bishops*, two *rooks*, one *queen*, and one *king*) representing their respective armies and defined as *material*.

The two sets of pieces are different colors (*images 2 and 3*): one light or white (white set/pieces) and one dark or black (black set/pieces).

The king and queen are the two most important pieces, and are sometimes called *royal pieces*. The queen and rook are named *major* or *heavy pieces* because they can checkmate with the king only, while the bishop and knight are named *minor pieces* because they cannot do the same. The queen, rook, and bishop are also defined as *long-range* or *line pieces* because they can linearly cover indefinite distances.

The pawns are placed on the second and seventh rank while the other pieces are on the first and eighth. Starting from the two corners and symmetrically, each player places the rook, knight, and bishop, while the queen is on the empty square of its color and the king on that of the opposite color (*diagram 13*).

The player who moves first (first player) is the one who has the king to the right of the queen and takes the name of *White*, while the other, who moves second (second player), takes the name of *Black*. In official competitions, organizers assign colors, while in the informal ones, they are usually decided by drawing.

Each piece moves with precise modalities and can be moved on a square occupied by an enemy piece, making what in jargon is called *capture* (possible but not mandatory action), i.e., *removing* or *eating* from the chessboard the enemy piece and taking its place.

In this context, a piece *attacks* or *threatens* an opponent's square if it can move on it. Specifically, an attack is the threat of capture of a piece or the threat to an important square of the opponent, while a threat is a plan, move, or combination that aims to damage the opponent’s position. In addition, a piece is defined as *active* when it is effective in terms of both movement possibilities and attack capabilities, and *passive* or *inactive* when it is not.

The term piece, depending on the context, can be used for different purposes:

- To identify any piece of a set and, in this case, with the synonyms chessman or man;

- To identify the non-pawn pieces and, in this case, dividing them into major pieces, minor pieces, and king;
- To identify only the minor pieces while the others are specified.

Also, different ways, more or less precise, can be used to identify a particular piece on the chessboard:

- By specifying the color (e.g., white bishop);
- By specifying the player to which it belongs (e.g., Black’s knight);
- By specifying the side to which it belongs, i.e., of king or queen (e.g., queen's rook);
- By specifying the file on which it is placed (e.g., pawn on the *h*-file);
- Through the coordinates of a notation system and normally with the algebraic one (e.g., bishop on *b5*);
- By combining two or more previous solutions (e.g., White's bishop on *b5*, Black's pawn on the *g*-file, rook's pawn on the queenside).

In official competitions, the pieces must be of *Staunton* type (Staunton chess set), from the name of one of the most important 19th-century chess players: *Howard Staunton* (Westmorland 04/1810–London 06/22/1874). The materials used are mainly wood or plastic, and the colors black and white or brown and off-white. The pieces must be easily distinguishable from each other, especially the king and queen, on top of which is respectively placed a cross and a crown. The king of a standard set must be between 3 and 4 inches in height and have a base that is 40−50% of its height. All other pieces have precise dimensions proportionate to those of the king. In addition, these are generally led and have a felt at the base to guarantee stability and easy mobility, respectively.

Bishop

The *bishop* (*diagram 15*) can move diagonally for the number of unoccupied squares it has available and can capture any enemy piece by taking its place.

The bishops are divided into *light-square* or *light bishops*, placed on the light squares, and *dark-square* or *dark bishop*, placed on the dark squares because they never change the color of the squares on which they can move (color bound). Each player has, therefore, a bishop pair with opposite characteristics. In addition, a bishop is called *good bishop* when it is not hindered in movements by pawns of the same color or *bad bishop* when it is.

The bishop placed at the beginning of the game on the queenside is

defined as *queen's bishop*, and the one placed on the kingside is defined as *king's bishop* (*diagram 14*).

Knight

The *knight* (*diagram 16*) can move one square horizontally and two squares vertically or vice versa, *leaping* those occupied, with a movement defined as *L-shaped*, and can capture any enemy piece by taking its place. Therefore, the knight moves and captures alternately on the white and black squares.

The knight placed at the beginning of the game on the queenside is defined as *queen's knight*, and the one placed on the kingside is defined as *king's knight* (*diagram 14*).

Rook

The *rook* (*diagram 17*) can move both horizontally and vertically for the number of unoccupied squares it has available and can capture any enemy piece by taking its place. It is also involved in the special move of the king called *castling* (described later).

The rook placed at the beginning of the game on the queenside is defined as *queen's rook*, and the one placed on the kingside is defined as *king's rook* (*diagram 14*).

Queen

The *queen* (*diagram 18*) is the most powerful and versatile piece; it can move in all directions for the number of unoccupied squares it has available and can capture any enemy piece by taking its place.

Pawn and Special Move

On the first move, the *pawn* (*diagram 19*) can move one or two squares forward as long as they are unoccupied, but it can only advance one square on the following moves. It cannot move backward and can capture any enemy piece only if placed on one of the two squares diagonally forward (*diagram 19*). In jargon, the movement of a pawn forward is named *push*.

If a pawn, as a result of the initial movement of two squares (double-step advance), finds itself next to one of those opponents, the latter in the following turn can capture it with the special move defined as *en passant* (*in*

the act of passing in French), i.e., diagonally and as if the captured pawn had moved only one square (*diagram 20*). This applies exclusively to pawns, and the maneuver must be finalized as soon as the opportunity arises, or one loses the right to perform it.

When a pawn reaches the last rank, it is *promoted*, i.e., replaced with another piece of the same color (to choose between queen, rook, bishop, and knight) even if already present on the chessboard (*diagram 20*). The decision to promote a pawn to a piece other than queen is defined as *underpromotion*.

Each pawn has a specific name according to the file it occupies: *rook's pawn*, *knight's pawn*, *bishop's pawn*, *queen's pawn*, and *king's pawn*.

King and Special Move

The *king* (*diagram 21*) can move one square in all directions as long as this is not controlled by an enemy piece. Once only per game, each of the two kings can perform the special move called *castling* (*diagrams 22 and 23*), the only case in which it is possible to move the king two squares and shift two pieces simultaneously. It consists of placing the king two squares towards one of the rooks and, in the same turn, move the rook chosen for the approach on the square between those of the departure and arrival of the king. Castling can be performed only under the following conditions:

- The king and the rook have never been moved (starting position);
- There are no pieces between the king and the rook;
- The king must never be in check in any squares chosen for the exchange, including those that will be crossed to perform it.

Castling allows the king to move to a safer position, away from the center, and at the same time bring a rook into a more active position because it is a central one. If executed with the king's rook (right side), it is defined as *kingside castling* or *short castling*, while with the queen's rook (left side), it is defined as *queenside castling* or *long castling*.

Two particular types of castling are:

- *Opposite castling*, which consists of the kingside castling of a player opposed to the queenside castling of the opponent (*diagrams 22 and 23*);
- *Artificial castling*, which consists of reaching the final castling position (or similar) in an alternative way and with a series of standard moves; it is implemented in case the king has lost the right to perform the special move for one of the reasons listed above.

The king can never be captured but only threatened, and when this happens, being on the way of an enemy piece, it is defined as *in check*, forcing the player to secure it in one of the following ways:

- By moving it on a *flight square* (square where a piece, generally the king, can move to escape an attack) but without using the castling because it is illegal (*diagram 24*);
- By eliminating the opponent's piece;
- By interposing a piece in its defense (except in the case of a threat by a knight because it can leap the squares occupied by other pieces).

When the saving of the king is not possible, it is *checkmate*, and the game ends. When the king is not in check, but it is impossible to make any legal move, the game ends in a *stalemate* or a *draw*.

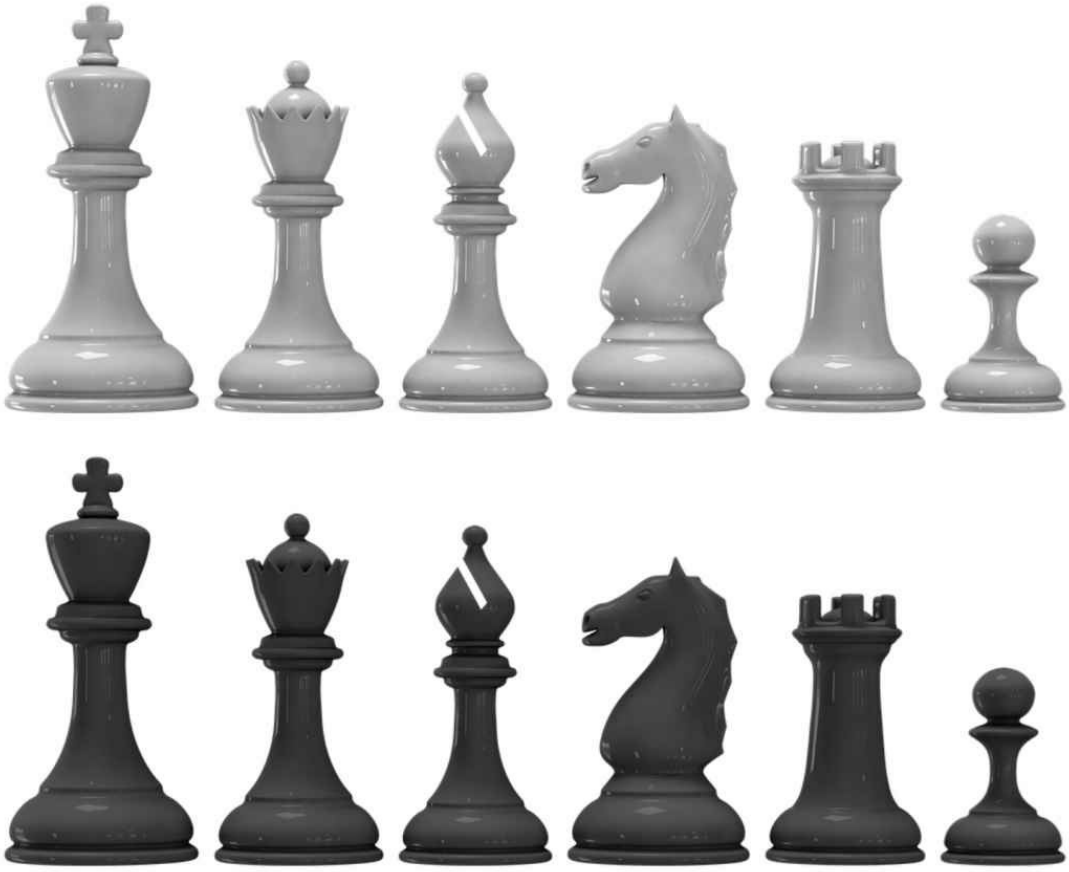


Image 2:
Example of white and black pieces
(from left: king, queen, bishop, knight, rook, and pawn)

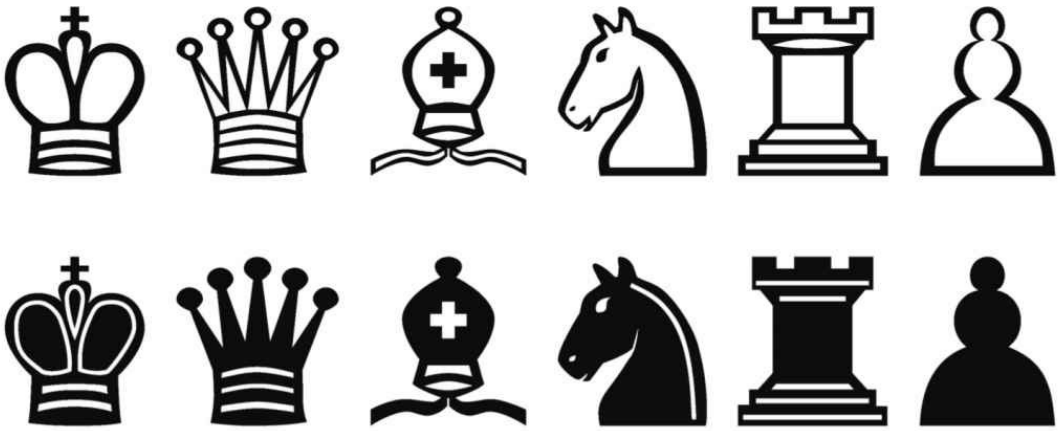


Image 3:
Example of symbols of white and black pieces
(from left: king, queen, bishop, knight, rook, and pawn)

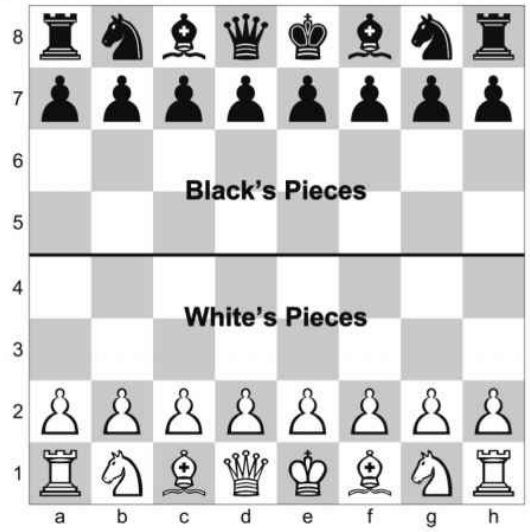


Diagram 13:
Example of initial position of the pieces on the chessboard
(White and Black's pieces)

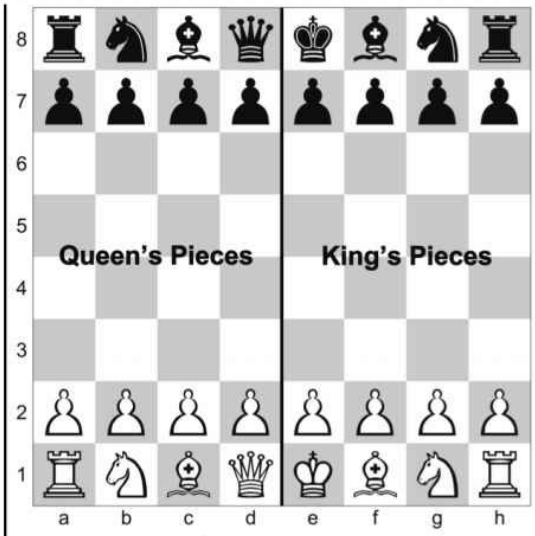


Diagram 14:
Example of queenside and kingside pieces

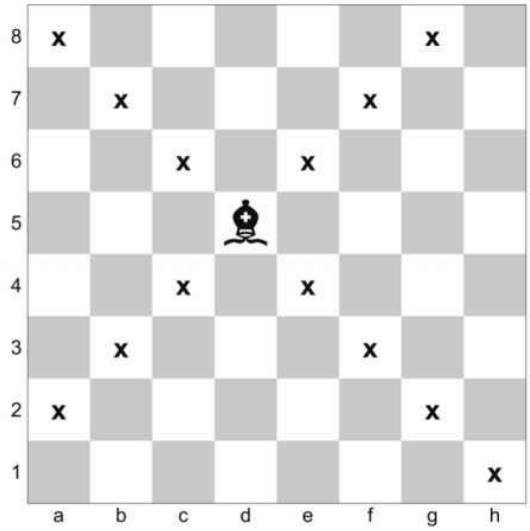


Diagram 15:
Example of moves of a bishop
(possible destination and capture squares identified by *x*)

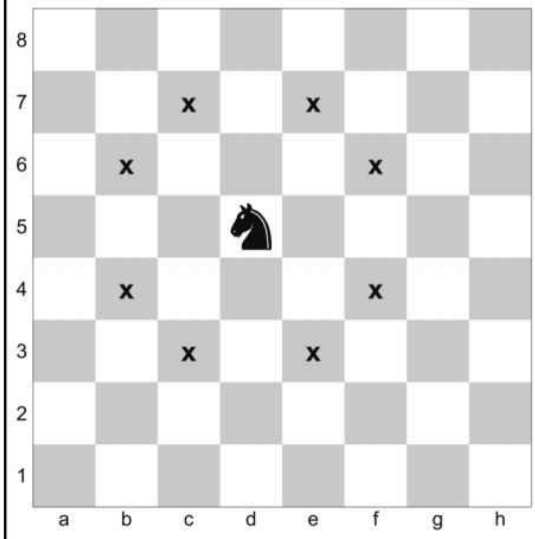


Diagram 16:
Example of moves of a knight
(possible destination and capture squares identified by *x*)

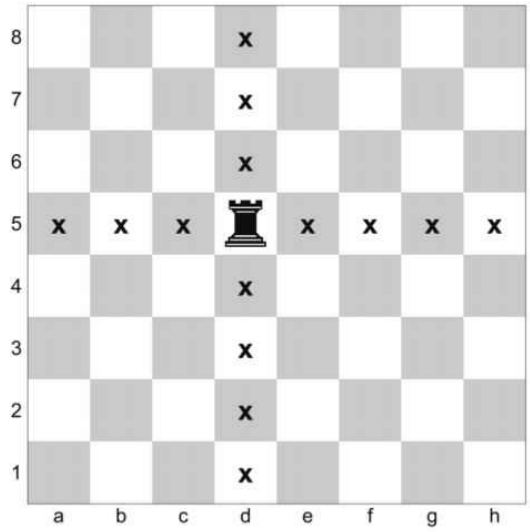


Diagram 17:
Example of moves of a rook
(possible destination and capture squares identified by *x*)

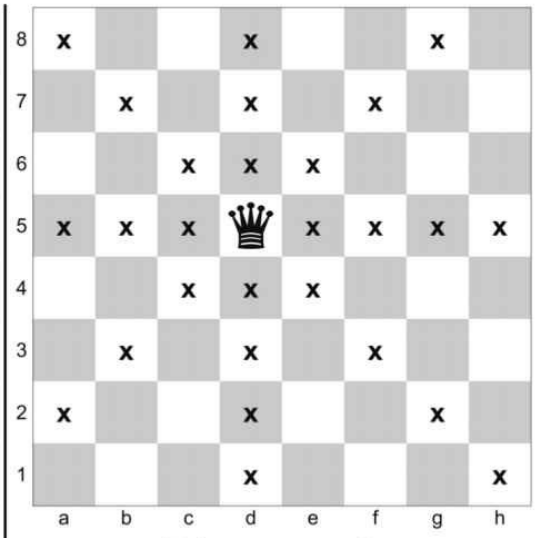


Diagram 18:
Example of moves of a queen
(possible destination and capture squares identified by *x*)

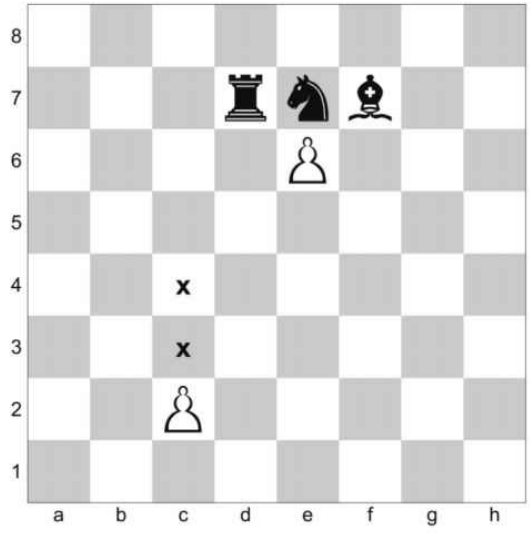


Diagram 19:
Example of moves of a pawn—1
(initial move from *c2* to *c3* or *c4*, capture from *e6* to *d7* or *f8* because the knight blocks the pawn on *e7*)

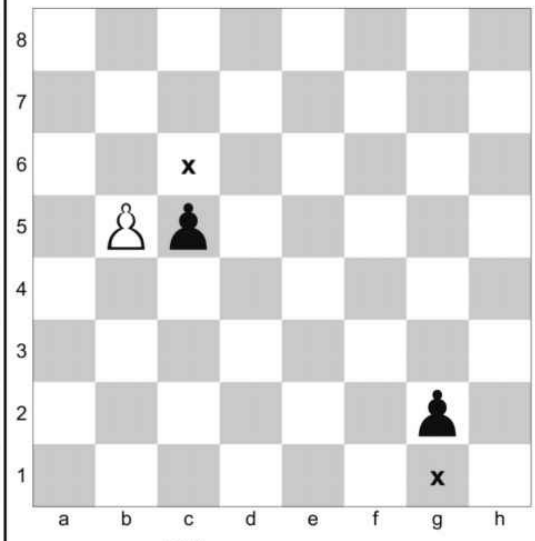


Diagram 20:
Example of moves of a pawn—2
(*en passant* capture from *b5* to *c6 and* promotion from *g2* to *g1*)

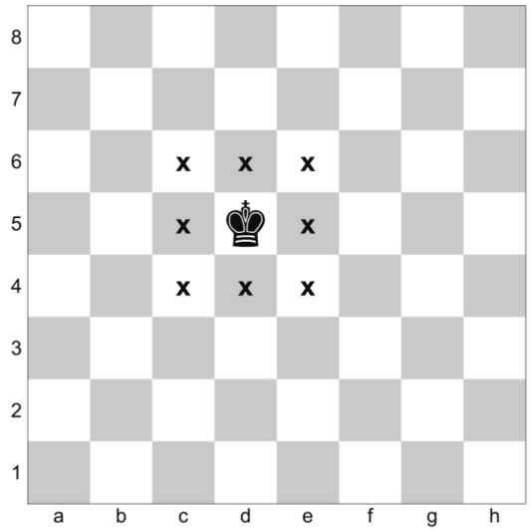


Diagram 21:
Example of moves of the king
(possible destination and capture squares identified by *x*)

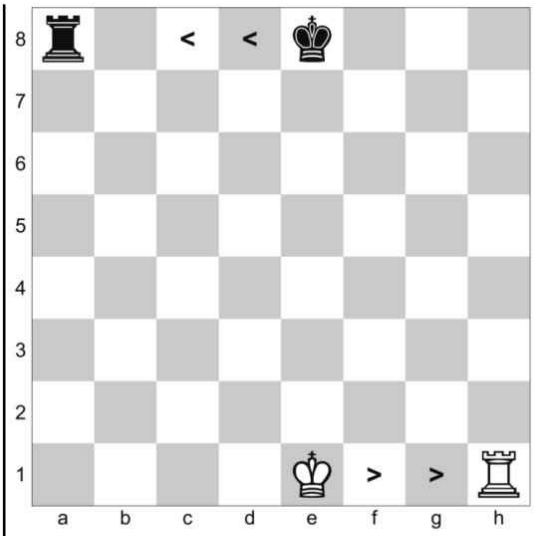


Diagram 22:
Example of castling—1
(opposite castling)

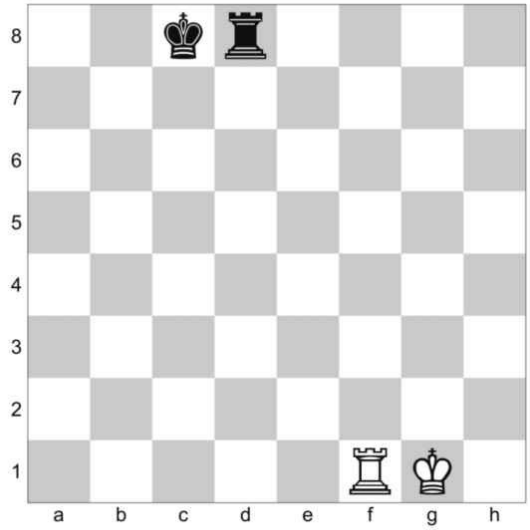


Diagram 23:
Example of castling—2
(queenside castling up and kingside castling down)

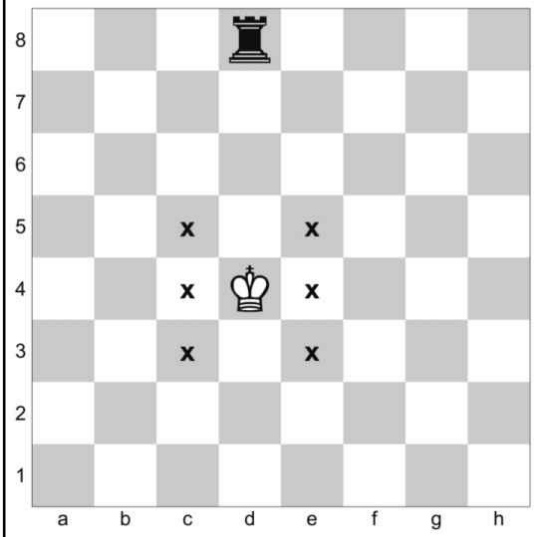


Diagram 24:
Example of flight squares
(possible moves of the king identified by *x*)

Conclusion

The possible ways of *ending* a chess *game* are multiple, and the various cases are discussed in detail below.

Check and Checkmate

The purpose of chess is to *checkmate* (often abbreviated as *mate*) the enemy king, thus determining a player’s win and the end of a game (*diagram 25*). This happens when the king, being directly threatened, cannot be secured in any way but only captured on the following move. The checkmate is always preceded by a *check*, that is an opponent's attack on the king from which, by regulation, it is mandatory to defend it (*diagram 26*). The attacked king is, therefore, *in check* and, as seen above, there are only three possible responses to this kind of situation:

- To capture the attacking enemy piece;
- To move the king to an adjacent unattacked square;
- To interpose a piece between the king and the attacking enemy piece.

Verbally announcing the check is not compulsory and in official games is sanctioned because considered inappropriate and annoying.

The various typologies of check are:

- *Simple check*, which consists of moving a piece to check the opponent's king (*diagram 26*);
- *Discovered check*, which consists of moving a piece to clear the line of attack of another piece that can check the opponent's king (*diagram 27*);
- *Double check*, which consists of checking the opponent's king with two pieces simultaneously after a *discovered check* (*diagram 28*);
- *Cross-check*, which consists of checking the opponent's king after the parry of another immediately preceding check (*diagram 29*).

The check is often performed in combination with other tactics to force the opponent into a disadvantageous situation, but, if not reasoned correctly, it can be counterproductive, leading, for example, to the loss of a *tempo* (a move). Specifically, these combinations aim to:

- Force the opponent to execute an exchange of pieces;
- Prevent the opponent's king from defending a friendly piece;
- Prevent the opponent's king from performing the castling;

- Execute a *fork* to eliminate an opponent's piece;
- Execute a *skewer* to eliminate a piece placed behind the opponent's king;
- Attack a different opponent's piece through a *discovered check*;
- Force the opponent's king into a disadvantageous position with a *double check*;
- End a game in a draw for *perpetual check* because of an unfavorable situation by repeatedly giving check to the opponent's king.

Draw

In chess, the term *draw* identifies a game that ended in a tie. This can happen due to a mutual agreement between the players who believe that it is impossible to defeat the opponent, or in particular situations where the arbiter has the right to suspend the game. The draw cases provided by the rules are described below.

- *Stalemate* (*diagram 30*) occurs when a player has no legal moves available even if he is not in check. In the endgame, the player at a disadvantage often seeks a situation of stalemate to avoid the defeat.
- *Draw by agreement* or *mutual agreement* occurs when a player (at any time of the game and except limitations), once moved and before activating the clock, proposes to the opponent an unconditional *draw offer* that is accepted (otherwise, the game continues normally).
- *Threefold repetition rule* occurs when, during the game, the same position is repeated three times, even if not consecutive, and one of the two players decides to claim a draw (otherwise, the game continues normally). If, instead, the repetition appears a fifth time, the game ends automatically in a draw for the *fivefold repetition rule*.
- *Perpetual check* (*diagram 31*) occurs when a cyclically repeating check position leads to a draw situation for the *threefold repetition rule*.
- *Fifty-move rule* occurs when there is neither a pawn movement nor a capture in the last fifty moves of a game, and one of the two players decides to claim a draw (otherwise, the game continues normally). If the situation continues up to seventy-five moves, the game ends automatically in a draw for the *seventy-five-move rule*.
- *Dead position* (*diagram 32*) occurs when it is impossible to give checkmate in an endgame because of the limited number of pieces left

or their particular configuration. In this case, the game ends automatically in a draw. Some examples of dead positions are: *king vs. king*, *king + bishop vs. king*, and *king + knight vs. king*.

- *Draw on time* occurs when a player runs out of time in games with time control, and the opponent does not have sufficient material to checkmate legally. In this case, the game ends automatically in a draw and not in a defeat.

Additional Rules

The end of a game can also happen in one of the ways described below.

- *Resignation* occurs when a player, believing the opponent is in advantage and able to conclude the game with a win easily, decides to spare himself the final moves, decreeing his defeat (It is considered rude to prolong the game in a completely hopeless situation). In contrast, the action taken by a player who intentionally runs out of time to avoid resigning is defined as *resignation on time*.
- *Win on time* occurs when a player wins in games with time control because the opponent runs out of time (flag-fall).
- *Forfeit* occurs when a player loses (forfeited) due to a violation of the rules laid down by a specific competition, for example, following his absence or exceeding the time limits (forfeit on time).

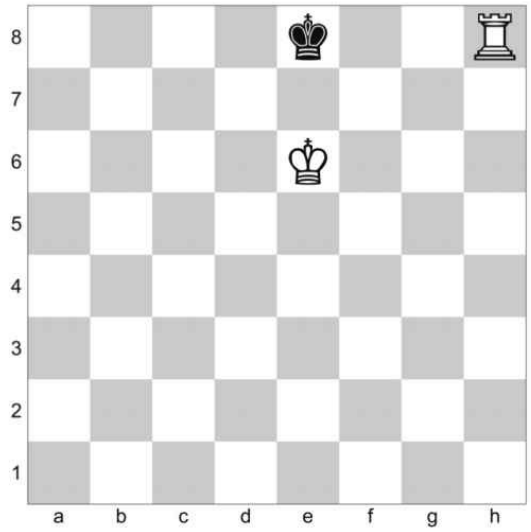


Diagram 25:
Example of checkmate
(White wins)

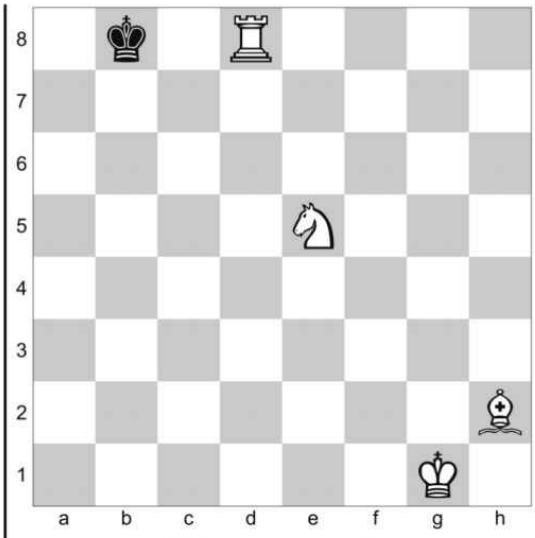


Diagram 26:
Example of simple check
(the rook attacks the king)

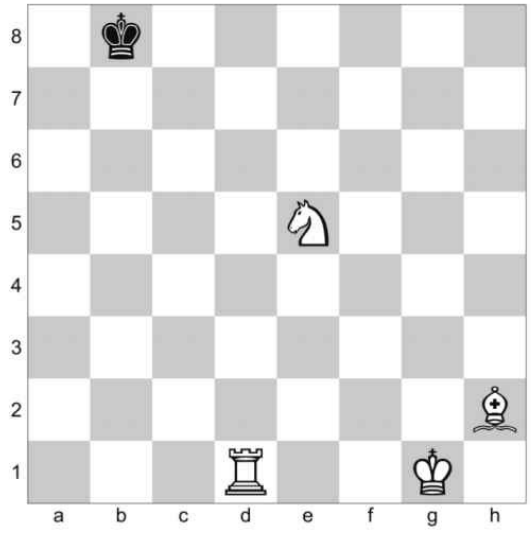


Diagram 27:
Example of discovered check
(the knight moves to *c4*, and the bishop attacks the king)

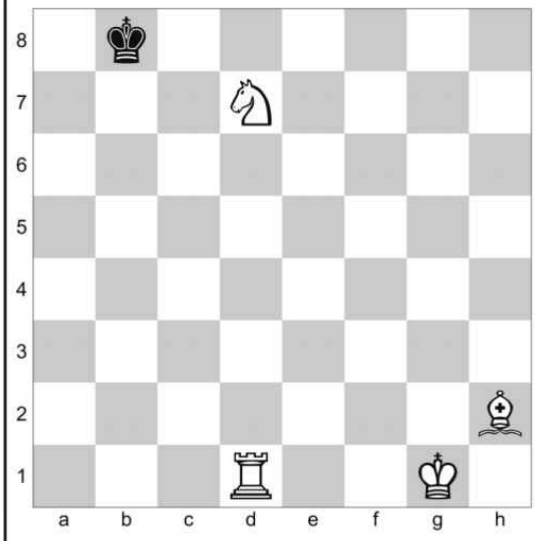


Diagram 28:
Example of double check
(the knight moves from *e5* to *d7* and, together with the bishop, attacks the king)

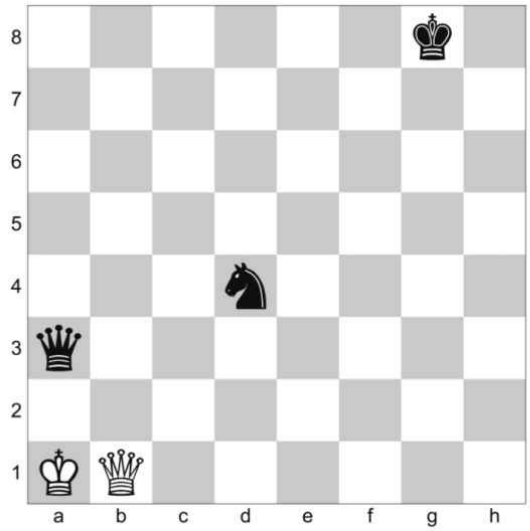


Diagram 29:

Example of cross-check

(black queen check on *a3* and subsequent white queen check on *a2*)

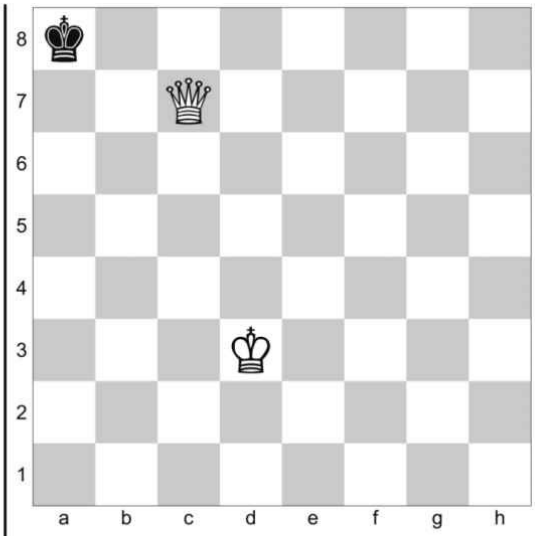


Diagram 30:

Example of stalemate

(Black has no legal moves)

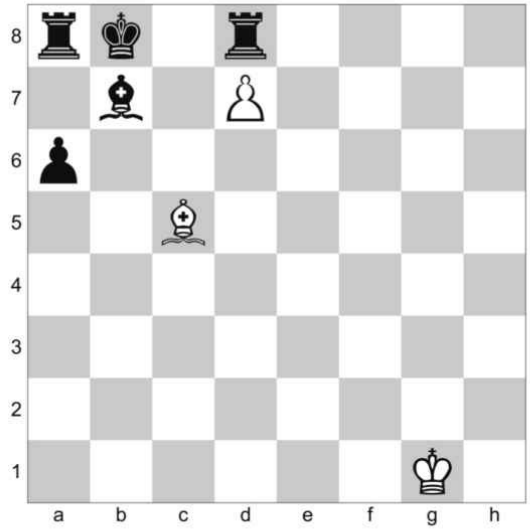


Diagram 31:

Example of perpetual check

(the white bishop gives perpetual check to the king on *d6* and *c5*)

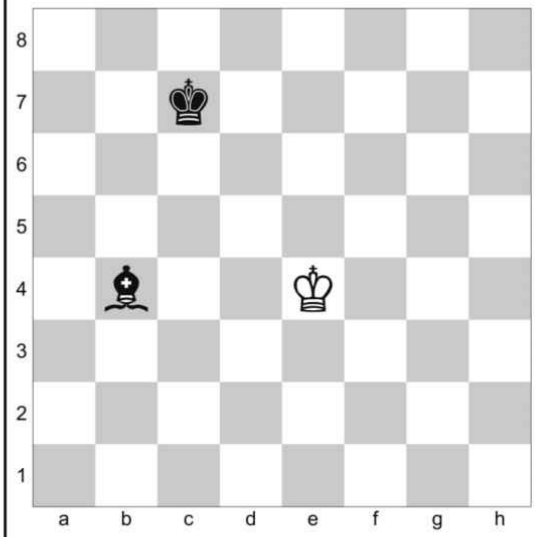


Diagram 32:

Example of dead position

(neither player can checkmate)

Notation

Different *transcription systems of the moves* have been used in the history of the game, but the current standard, described in the international chess regulation, is represented by the *algebraic notation*. In fact, in official competitions, each player must record the moves on a paper report named *score sheet* (example in the last part of the manual) using this system, except for *fast chess* because of its short cadence. Other common techniques are the *descriptive notation*, *ICCF numeric notation*, and *Forsyth-Edwards notation*.

For example, the opening moves—*White moves the pawn to d4*, and *Black moves the pawn to d5*—are written:

- In algebraic notation; *1.d4 d5*
- In descriptive notation; *1.P-Q4 P-Q4*
- In ICCF numeric notation; *1.4244 4745*
- In Forsyth-Edwards notation; *rnbqkbnr/ppp1pppp/8/3p4/3P4/8/PPP1PPPP/RNBQKBNR w KQkq*

Algebraic Notation

The *algebraic notation* (AN) is the most common method to record and describe games, and it is also the only one admitted by FIDE in the standardized version defined as *standard algebraic notation* (SAN), which represents a particular subcategory (*image 4*). There are several subcategories derived from algebraic notation, and two of the most important (along with the previously mentioned) are the *figurine algebraic notation* (FAN) and the *long algebraic notation* (LAN).

The main features of this transcription methodology, in the English version, are described below.

- Each square is identified, according to White's point of view, by a letter from *a* to *h* for the files and by a number from *1* to *8* for the ranks.
- Each piece, except the pawn, is identified by an uppercase letter, usually the first of its name in the language of reference (K = king / Q = queen / R = rook / B = bishop / N = knight). In the printed publications and chess literature, the figurine algebraic notation is often used, which replaces the letters of the pieces with their symbols to read moves independently from the language (international

language).

- Each move is indicated by the initial of the piece, except for pawns, and by the destination square (e.g., f4 = pawn moves to *f4* / Bf4 = bishop moves to *f4*).
- If two equal pieces can reach the same square, the departure rank or file of the piece is inserted before the destination square (e.g., two knights on *b2* and *d2* = Nbc4 or Ndc4).
- The long algebraic notation can be used to avoid ambiguity, i.e., indicating for each move both the departure and destination squares of a piece, separated by a hyphen (e.g., Nb1-c3 = knight from *b1* to *c3*).
- When a piece performs a capture, an *x* is placed between the initial of the name and the destination square (e.g., Bxf5 = bishop captures on *f5*). Sometimes the colon is used instead of the *x* (e.g., N:f5 = bishop captures on *f5*). In the case of capture by a pawn, the starting file is indicated, followed by the *x* and the destination square (e.g., dxc5 = pawn on the *d*-file captures on *c5*).
- In the case of *en passant* capture, the destination square of the capturing pawn is indicated and can be followed by the abbreviation *e.p.* (e.g., cxd6 e.p. = pawn on the *c*-file captures *en passant* on *d6*).
- The pawn promotion is indicated by the initial of the chosen piece after the move, and sometimes the equal sign is added (e.g., b8Q = pawn reaches the *b8* square and is promoted to queen or b8=Q).
- The kingside castling is indicated with *0-0* and queenside castling with *0-0-0* (using numbers and not letters).
- The check is indicated with a + and the checkmate with a # or ++, although the latter notation is sometimes used for the double check (e.g., Bxd7+ = bishop captures on *d7* and check the king).
- The draw offer proposed by a player is indicated with an = in correspondence with the move.
- At the end of the game, the result is indicated (1−0 = White won / 0−1 = Black won / ½−½ = draw).
- In the case of a series of moves, each move of White is preceded by a progressive number, and sometimes, for greater clarity, each full move occupies a separate line (e.g., 1.d4 d5 2.c4). If the first move of a sequence is by Black (commentary between half-moves), an ellipsis is placed before (e.g., 1...Bg4).
- After a move, it is also possible to express a commentary (annotation)

using words, notation, or specific symbols (e.g., 1.e4 e5 2.f4—King's Gambit—2...exf4). Some of the main symbols commonly used are shown in the table below.

[x] *capture*
[e.p.] *en passant capture*
[0-0] *kingside castling*
[0-0-0] *queenside castling*
[+] *check*
[++] *double check*
[#] *checkmate*
[…] *Black to move (after a commentary)*

[!] *very good move*
[!!] *brilliant move*
[?] *mistake*
[??] *blunder*
[!?] *interesting move*
[?!] *dubious move*
[□] *zugzwang*

[±] *or* [+/=] *slight advantage for White*
[∓) *or* [=/+] *slight advantage for Black*
[±] *or* [+/-] *clear advantage for White*
[∓] *or* [-/+] *clear advantage for Black*
[+-] *decisive advantage for White*
[-+] *decisive advantage for Black*
[=] *or* [≈] *equal chances*
[∞] *unclear position*

[→] *attack*
[⇄] *counterplay*
[↑] *initiative (advantage)*
[↑↑] *or* [↻] *development (advantage)*
[○] *space (advantage)*
[⊕] *zeitnot*

Descriptive Notation

In the past, the *descriptive notation* (*images 5 and 6*) was the reference method but has fallen into disuse and has been replaced by the algebraic notation because it is easier to understand.

The main features of this transcription methodology, in the English version, are described below.

- Each piece is identified by an uppercase letter, usually the first of its name in the reference language (K = king / Q = queen / R = rook / B = bishop / N or Kt = knight / P = pawn).
- Each file is identified by the first letter of the name of the non-pawn pieces that occupies the first rank at the beginning of the game, preceded by a *K* for the kingside and a *Q* for the queenside, except for the central files.
- Each rank is identified by a progressive numbering from *1* to *8*, starting from the nearest one to each player.
- Each square has two names, one for White and one for Black (e.g., the square in the lower right corner from White's point of view is *KR1* but becomes *KR8* from Black's one).
- To identify a move, first, must be indicated the piece moved and then separated by a dash, the destination square (e.g., N-KB3 = knight moves to *KB3*). Generally, the complete description is abbreviated to simplify when this does not produce ambiguity (e.g., QP-Q4 becomes P-Q4 because only a pawn can move to *Q4*).
- The capture is indicated by the two pieces involved separated by an *x* (e.g., QxB = queen captures bishop).
- The kingside castling is indicated by *O-O* or *castles KR* and queenside castling by *O-O-O* or *castles QR*.
- The pawn promotion is indicated with the piece chosen between brackets or, sometimes, using the slash or equal signs (e.g., P-C8(Q) or P-C8/Q or P-C8=Q = pawn promoted to queen on *C8*).
- Sometimes a commentary is added to a move using special terms or symbols, as in the algebraic notation (see the table above).
- A series of moves is indicated by writing first a progressive number, then White’s move followed by Black’s one (e.g., 1.P-K4 P-K4 2.N-KB3 N-QB3). If there is no appropriate move to be used by White, as when the half-moves are interrupted by a commentary, an ellipsis is

used instead.

Numeric Notation

The *ICCF numeric notation* (*image 7*) is the official transcription system used by the *International Correspondence Chess Federation* (ICCF) to avoid possible misunderstandings due to language differences.

The main features of this transcription methodology are described below.

- Each square is identified by a two-digit number, of which the first indicates the file and the second the rank from White's point of view (e.g., 34 = file *3* and rank *4*).
- Each move is identified by a four-digit number, of which the first pair indicates the square of the piece moved and the second pair indicates the destination square (e.g., 1.3234 = pawn from square *32* to *34*).
- The pawn promotion is indicated by adding a digit that identifies the chosen piece, i.e., 1 = queen, 2 = rook, 3 = bishop, 4 = knight (e.g., 27281 = pawn moves from square *27* to *28* and is promoted to queen).
- The castling is indicated by describing the movement of the king alone because it is the only case in which the piece can move two squares (e.g., 5171 = White castles kingside).

FEN Notation

Another transcription technique widely used is the *Forsyth-Edwards notation* (FEN), invented by *David Forsyth* (1854–1909) and later applied by *Steven Edwards* to electronic processing. This notation is now a constant in computer science because it allows creating strings of code, also called *FEN record*, to describe, with a series of letters and numbers, a precise position on the chessboard and restart a game later time. A record, usually indicated between square brackets, consists of six fields interspersed with spaces that represent, respectively:

- The piece placement;
- The player who moves;
- The castling availability;
- The *en passant* capture availability;
- The half-move number;
- The full-move number.

The system itself has no real use for the average player but it is

interesting at the level of general knowledge as it is regularly found in online game.

a8	b8	c8	d8	e8	f8	g8	h8
a7	b7	c7	d7	e7	f7	g7	h7
a6	b6	c6	d6	e6	f6	g6	h6
a5	b5	c5	d5	e5	f5	g5	h5
a4	b4	c4	d4	e4	f4	g4	h4
a3	b3	c3	d3	e3	f3	g3	h3
a2	b2	c2	d2	e2	f2	g2	h2
a1	b1	c1	d1	e1	f1	g1	h1

Image 4:
Identification of squares in algebraic notation

QR8	QN8	QB8	Q8	K8	KB8	KN8	KR8
QR7	QN7	QB7	Q7	K7	KB7	KN7	KR7
QR6	QN6	QB6	Q6	K6	KB6	KN6	KR6
QR5	QN5	QB5	Q5	K5	KB5	KN5	KR5
QR4	QN4	QB4	Q4	K4	KB4	KN4	KR4
QR3	QN3	QB3	Q3	K3	KB3	KN3	KR3
QR2	QN2	QB2	Q2	K2	KB2	KN2	KR2
QR1	QN1	QB1	Q1	K1	KB1	KN1	KR1

Image 5:
Identification of squares in descriptive notation—1
(White's point of view)

QR1	QN1	QB1	Q1	K1	KB1	KN1	KR1
QR2	QN2	QB2	Q2	K2	KB2	KN2	KR2
QR3	QN3	QB3	Q3	K3	KB3	KN3	KR3
QR4	QN4	QB4	Q4	K4	KB4	KN4	KR4
QR5	QN5	QB5	Q5	K5	KB5	KN5	KR5
QR6	QN6	QB6	Q6	K6	KB6	KN6	KR6
QR7	QN7	QB7	Q7	K7	KB7	KN7	KR7
QR8	QN8	QB8	Q8	K8	KB8	KN8	KR8

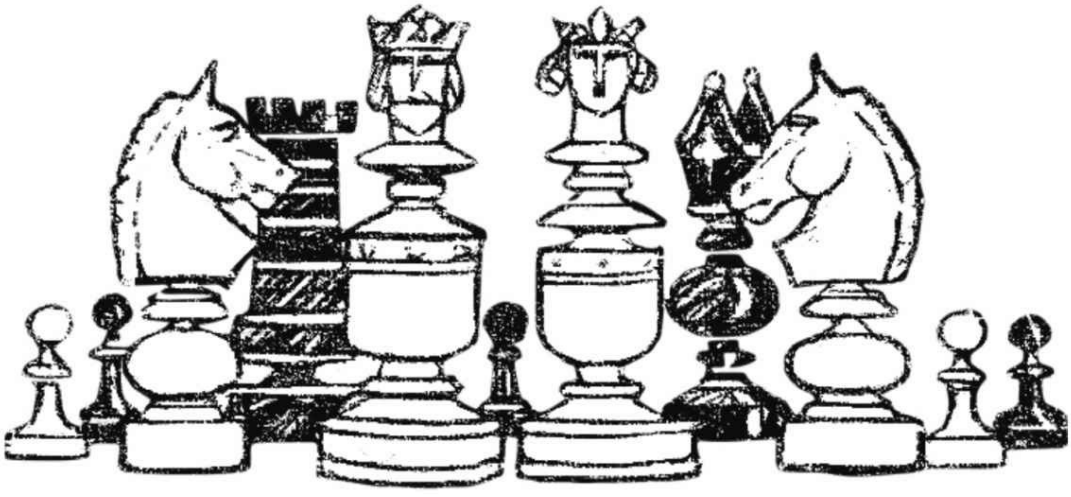
Image 6:
Identification of squares in descriptive notation—2
(Black's point of view)

18	28	38	48	58	68	78	88
17	27	37	47	57	67	77	87
16	26	36	46	56	66	76	86
15	25	35	45	55	65	75	85
14	24	34	44	54	64	74	84
13	23	33	43	53	63	73	83
12	22	32	42	52	62	72	82
11	21	31	41	51	61	71	81

Image 7:
Identification of squares in numeric notation

PART II

SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE GAME



Elements of Tactics

In chess, *tactics* are based on the respect of a certain game strategy and consist of studying short-term actions that can be calculated in advance. Specifically, this concerns the move-by-move setting of threats and defenses.

To *attack* (threaten) an opponent's piece means being able to capture it on the following move. To *defend* (protecting) a piece means that, in case of threat and possible capture by the same from the opponent, the enemy piece can be captured on the following move (recapture). Normally, every attack corresponds to a defensive reaction, and sometimes the threat alone can be enough to destabilize the opponent (psychological pressure). In the case of an opponent’s threat to a piece, one can intervene in several ways:

- By capturing the enemy piece;
- By capturing another enemy piece;
- By moving the piece to an unoccupied square, covered or attacked, depending on the tactical objective to be achieved;
- By interposing another piece in defense;
- By covering the piece to favor a valuable exchange;
- By blocking the enemy piece to make the capture disadvantageous;
- By simply allowing the capture of the piece to gain an advantage later.

The ultimate purpose of any tactic is to win material, i.e., capture an enemy piece without suffering losses or losing pieces of low value. In fact, the basic tactical schemes exploit the various characteristics of the pieces or the particular disposition of the same on the chessboard to obtain a net and immediate advantage. These can be united in complex combinations (sequence of moves) that often involve sacrifices to achieve a decisive material gain or the checkmate. Very appreciated by the fans are the particularly brilliant combinations, and occasionally these can make a game unforgettable, as in the case of the *Evergreen Game* (1852, Adolf Anderssen *vs*. Jean Dufresne), *Immortal Game* (London, 06/21/1851, Adolf Anderssen *vs*. Lionel Kieseritzky), *Peruvian Immortal* (Budapest, 1934, Esteban Canal *vs*. unknown amateur), and *The Game of the Century* (New York City, 10/17/1956, Donald Byrne *vs*. Bobby Fischer), all analyzed in detail in the last part of the manual.

The main tactical maneuvers, whose knowledge is indispensable for every self-respecting chess player, are deepened below and listed in alphabetical order.

Battery

The *battery* (*diagram 33*) consists of a formation of two or more pieces placed on the same line to increase their offensive capacities, such as two rooks on the same file or rank (*connected rooks* or *doubled rooks*) or queen and bishop on the same diagonal. This formation is normally used to weaken the opponent’s defense or win material.

Block

The *block* (*diagrams 34 and 35*) consists of interposing a piece between one of one's own attacked and that of the opponent who threatens it, but only when there is at least one unoccupied square between the two and when a long-range piece makes the attack. Once a block has been performed, the interposed piece is actually *pinned* to the defended one relatively or absolutely, depending on whether it is possible to move it or not (see *pin*). The tactic is usually used for defensive purposes.

Blockade

The *blockade* (*diagram 36*) consists of stopping the advance of an opponent's pawn and, consequently, the movements of other enemy pieces through one’s piece frontally placed. The tactic is normally used for defensive purposes and is most effective against *passed* or *isolated pawns*.

Decoying

The *decoying* (*diagrams 37 and 38*) consists in luring, usually through a sacrifice, an opponent's piece (often the king or queen) on a certain square to obtain an advantage, typically, to win material, give the checkmate, or hinder the previous function of the decoyed piece.

Deflection

The *deflection* (*diagrams 39 and 40*) is the opposite of decoying and consists of inducing an opponent's piece to move to a different square, exposing a valuable piece. The tactic is normally used to prevent the deflected enemy piece from continuing to perform its previous function, especially when it is fundamental to the opponent’s defense. If the deflected piece is also overloaded, the enemy defense yields, often resulting in a *fatal* disadvantage for the opponent.

Discovered Attack

The *discovered attack* (*diagrams 41 and 42*) consists in moving a piece to clear the line of attack of a long-range piece that, not being limited anymore, can attack the opponent. The tactic is usually used to win material or a *tempo* and is often followed by a *double attack* because the moved piece can in turn threaten other enemy pieces, weakening the opponent's defense. Particular is the case of the *discovered check*, in which the attacked piece is the enemy king.

Fork and Double Attack

The *fork* (*diagram 43*) consists of a piece that simultaneously attacks two or more enemy pieces. When the attacking pieces are more than one, it is called *double attack* (*diagram 44*). In some cases, the two terms are used as synonyms; in others, they are simply confused with each other, but in fact this does not distort the meaning. The piece that threatens is defined as *forking piece* and the attacked pieces as *forked*.

The tactic increases the pressure on the opponent because it forces him to strengthen his defense or change its structure and usually is used to win material or a *tempo*. In addition, this tactic is particularly effective both when one of the two attacked pieces is the enemy king and when a knight is used to threaten the opponent because it can leap over the other pieces (knight fork). In this context, the simultaneous threat by a knight to the king, queen, and possibly other opponent's pieces is named *family fork* or *family check*. In contrast, the simultaneous attack by any piece on the opponent's king and queen is named *royal fork*.

Interference

The *interference* or *obstruction* (*diagrams 45 and 46*) consists in interrupting the line (connection) between an opponent's piece or a square and its defender by interposing one's piece. The tactic involves the sacrifice of the interposed piece and is normally used to block the opponent's action.

Overloading

The *overloading* or *overworking* (*diagram 47*) consists of forcing an opponent's piece to defend more pieces or more squares simultaneously, following a threat. The tactic is normally used to prevent the overloaded

enemy piece to continue to perform one of its defensive tasks, deflect it elsewhere, or win material.

Pin

The *pin* consists of attacking an opponent's piece that covers a more important one with a long-range piece. This is defined as *relative pin* (*diagram 48*) when it is possible but not necessary to move the pinned piece, or as *absolute pin* (*diagram 49*) when it is illegal to move the pinned piece because it would expose the king to capture.

When a piece (queen, rook, or bishop) is pinned but can move along the line where it is placed without being able to leave it, it is called *partial pin*. When the pin is not absolute, and the piece can be moved legally but causing damage to the player (for example, the checkmate), it is called *situational pin*.

The tactic is normally used to win material, weaken the opponent’s defense, or immobilize a strategic enemy piece. The action performed to remove a pin is defined as *unpinning*.

Promotion

The *promotion* (*diagram 50*) consists in pushing a pawn to the last rank to be replaced with another more powerful piece. This is both a rule and tactic; in fact, the promotion or threat of its realization can sometimes be enough to decide the result of a game (psychological pressure). The tactic is normally used to obtain a material advantage in the endgame, and sometimes minor pieces are sacrificed to achieve this goal.

Often a pawn is promoted to queen (in jargon, *queening*) because it represents the most effective piece and also the one that increases tactical advantage in a greater way, but in certain situations, an *underpromotion* can be more useful, for example, for the different movement capacity of the knight compared to the other pieces.

Sacrifice

The *sacrifice* (diagrams 51 and 52) consists of deliberately losing a piece to obtain a compensation (an advantage in exchange for a loss). The tactic is generally used for different purposes depending on the context, including

attacking the opponent’s king, allowing the development of the pieces, improve a position, avoid the defeat, win material or obtain a simplification of the game.

Skewer

The *skewer* is the opposite of the pin and consists of attacking an opponent's piece that covers a less important one, using a long-range piece. This is defined as *relative skewer* (*diagram 53*) when it is possible but not necessary to move the attacked piece or as *absolute skewer* (*diagram 54*) when the king is attacked, and it is mandatory to secure it. The tactic is usually used to win material, forcing the opponent to move the most valuable piece and expose the other to capture.

Tempo

A *tempo* (*tempos* or *tempi* in plural) consists of a turn or a move. Therefore, to *gain a tempo* means obtaining a particular result with one less move; on the contrary, to *lose a tempo* means performing one more move than necessary (wasting moves). The tactic to gain or lose a tempo is often implemented through the use of some openings, delivering check to the king, or moving the same piece twice to get a different advantage depending on the context, such as the management of the opposition in some endgames (topic discussed later).

Undermining

The *undermining*, *removal of the guard*, or *removing the defender* (*diagrams 55 and 56*) consists of capturing an opponent’s defensive piece to leave another enemy piece undefended or completely defenseless. Therefore, the opponent can only choose to recapture or save the defenseless piece. In fact, the tactic is normally used to weaken the opponent’s defense or win material.

X-Ray

The term *x-ray* identifies both an offensive tactic, defined as *x-ray attack* (*diagram 57*), which consists of indirectly attacking an enemy piece through one or more of one’s pieces, and a defensive tactic, defined as *x-ray defense* (*diagram 58*), which consists of defending one’s piece through one of those

enemies. The offensive tactic is normally used to win material, while the defensive one to discourage the opponent from capturing a piece.

Zwischenzug

The *zwischenzug* (*diagrams 59 and 60*), *intermediate move* in German, consists of postponing a previously planned move by performing an intermediate forcing one—to which the opponent is obliged to respond—to increase its effectiveness. The tactic forces the enemy to abandon the previous attack to face the new threat. The result is the reversal of a pre-existing situation that prevents him from completing a determined tactic or, more generally, his game.

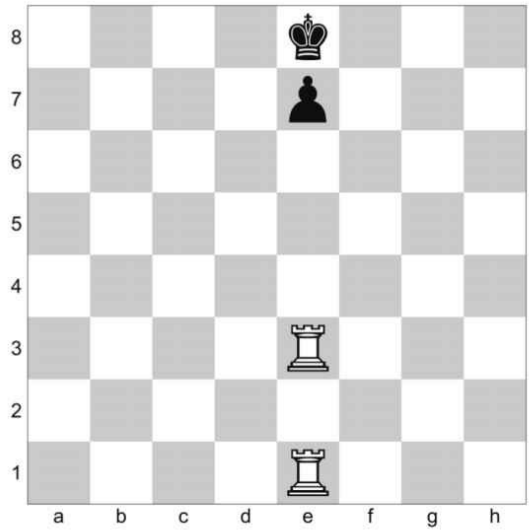


Diagram 33:
Example of battery
(doubled rooks on the *e*-file)

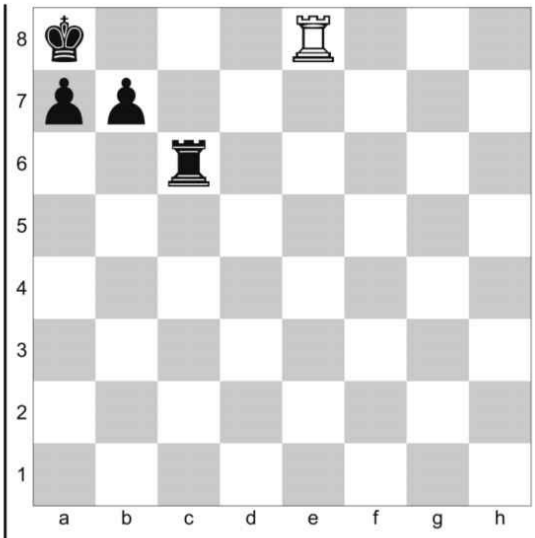


Diagram 34:
Example of block—1
(the white rook threatens the king)

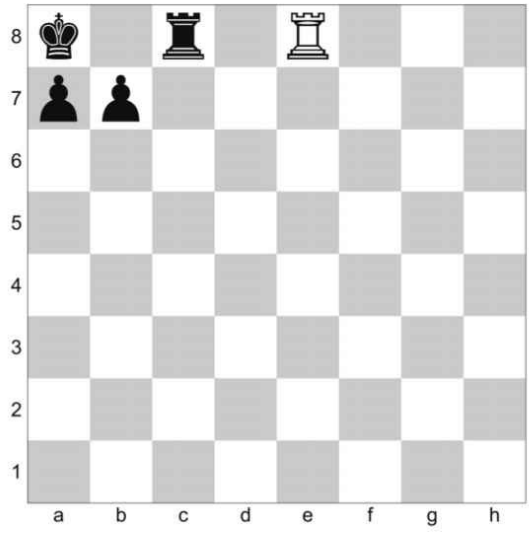


Diagram 35:
Example of block—2
(the black rook moves to *c8* to protect the king)

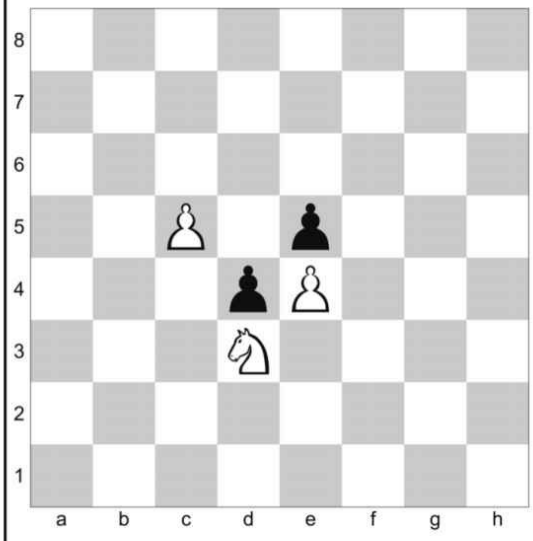


Diagram 36:
Example of blockade
(the knight blocks the advance of the black pawn on *d4*)

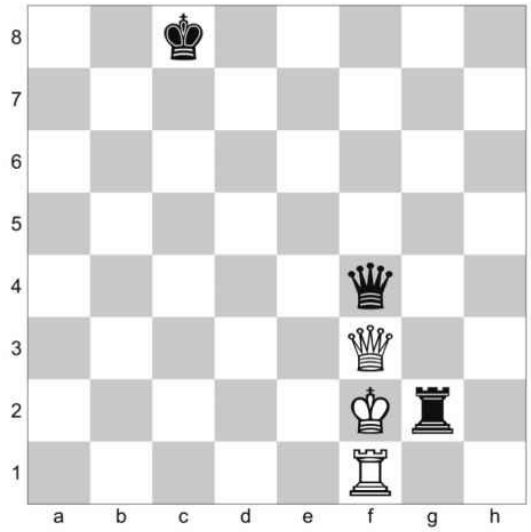


Diagram 37:

Example of decoying—1

(the black rook lures the king by threatening it)

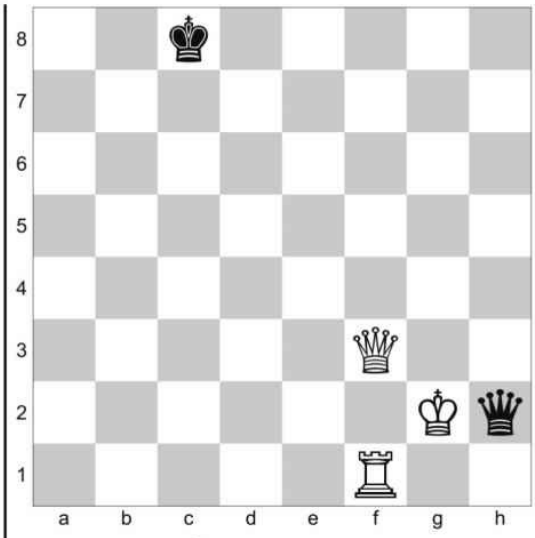


Diagram 38:

Example of decoying—2

(the white king captures the rook and the black queen checkmates)

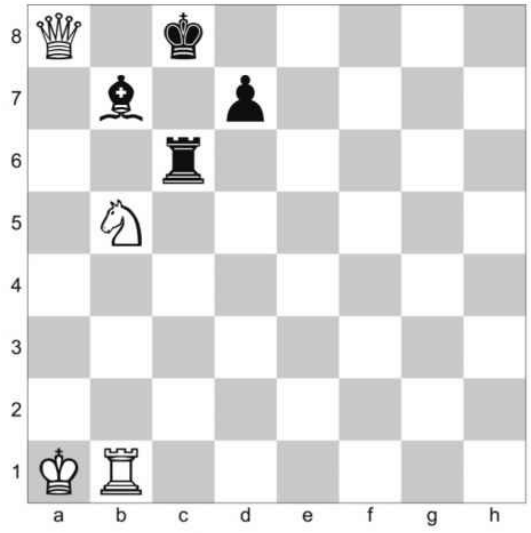


Diagram 39:

Example of deflection—1

(the white queen attacks the king to deflect the black bishop and clear the *b*-file to the rook)

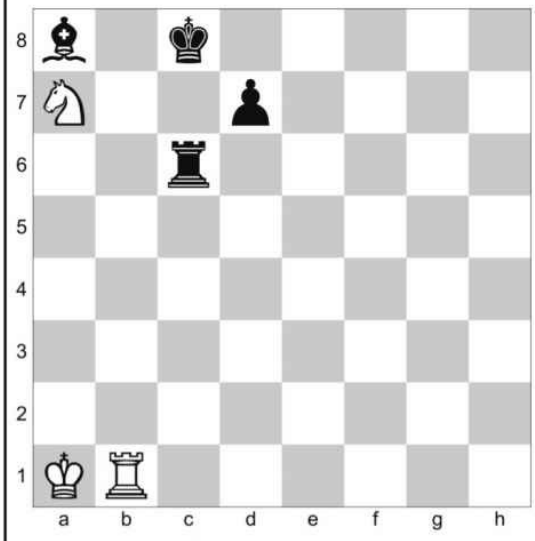


Diagram 40:

Example of deflection—2

(the black bishop captures the queen, the white knight moves to *a7* and, together with the rook, checkmates the king)

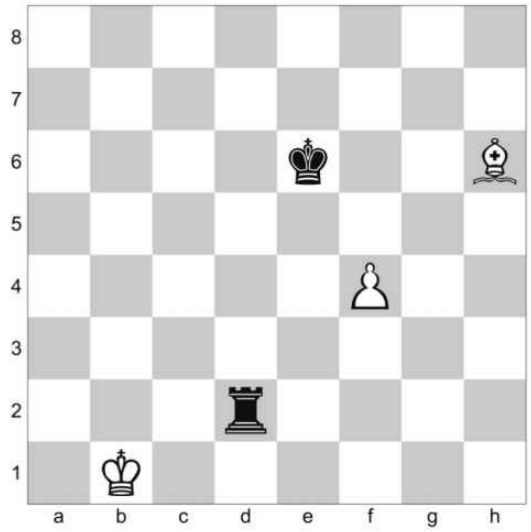


Diagram 41:
Example of discovered attack—1
(the white pawn moves to *f5* to discover the attack of the bishop against the rook)

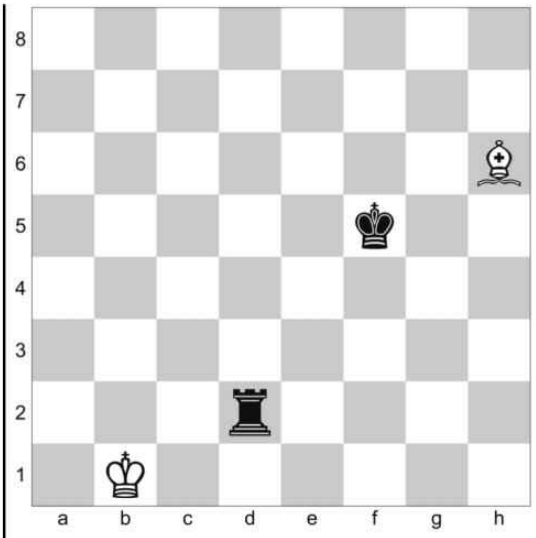


Diagram 42:
Example of discovered attack—2
(the black king eliminates the pawn, and the bishop can attack the rook)

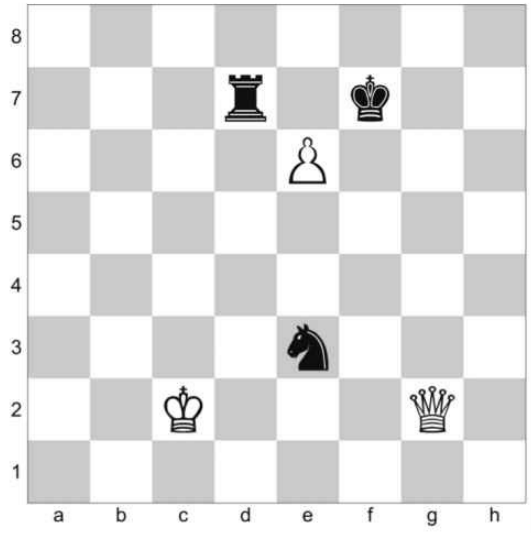


Diagram 43:
Example of fork
(pawn fork up and knight fork down)

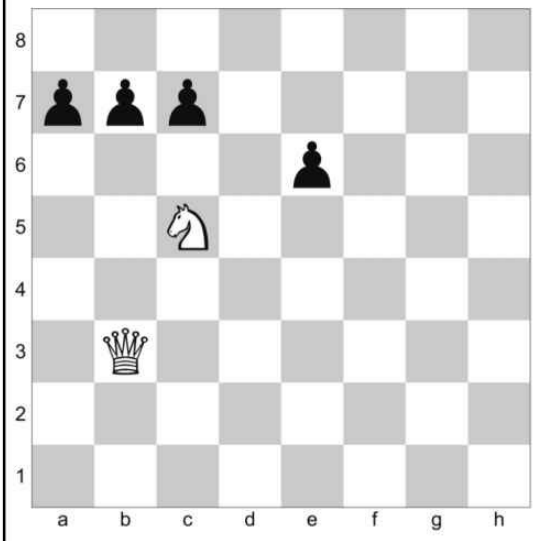


Diagram 44:
Example of double attack
(multiple and simultaneous threats by the queen and knight to the pawns on *b7* and *e6*)

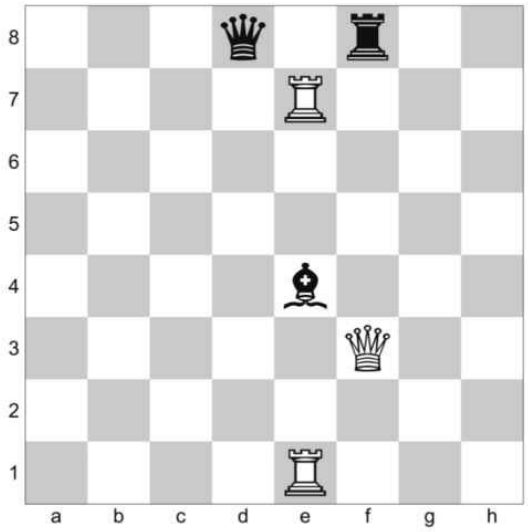


Diagram 45:

Example of interference—1

(Black interposes the bishop between the white rooks and simultaneously threatens the queen)

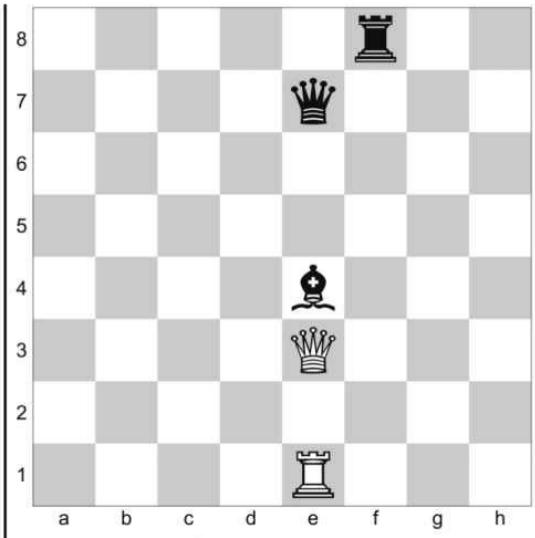


Diagram 46:

Example of interference—2

(White saves the queen by losing the rook)

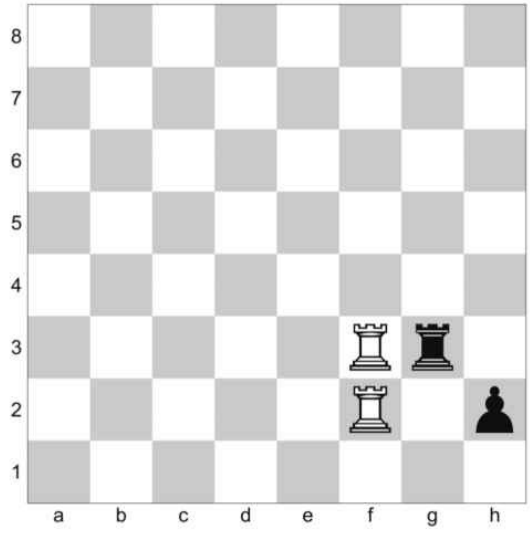


Diagram 47:

Example of overloading

(the white rook on *f2* must protect the rook on *f3* and block the black pawn on *h2*)

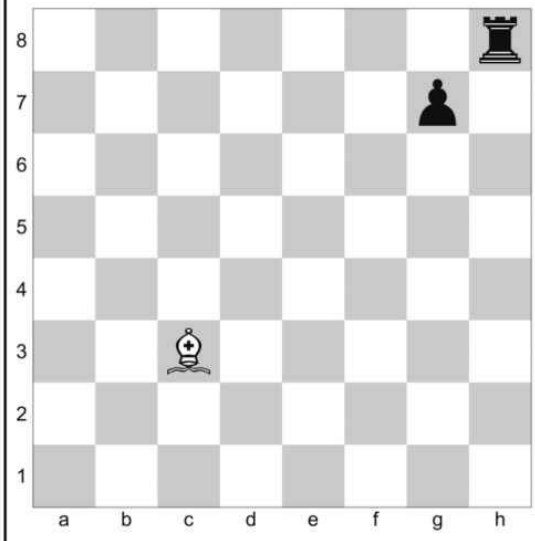


Diagram 48:

Example of relative pin

(the white bishop threatens the pawn protecting the rook)

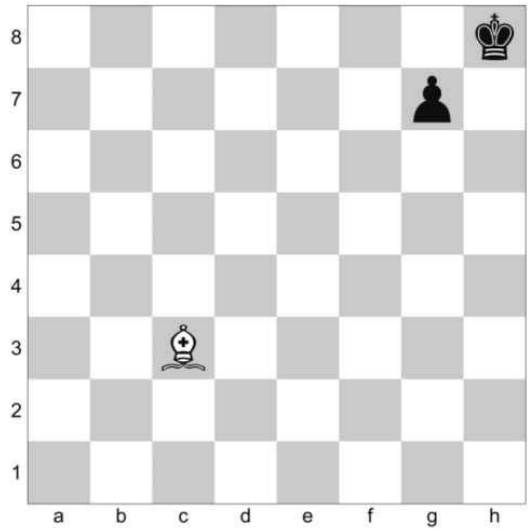


Diagram 49:

Example of absolute pin

(the white bishop threatens the pawn protecting the king)

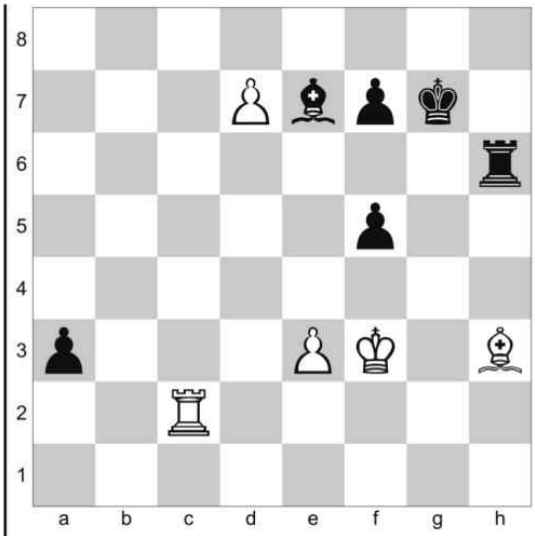


Diagram 50:

Example of pawn promotion

(the black pawn on *a3* and the white pawn on *d7* attempt promotion)

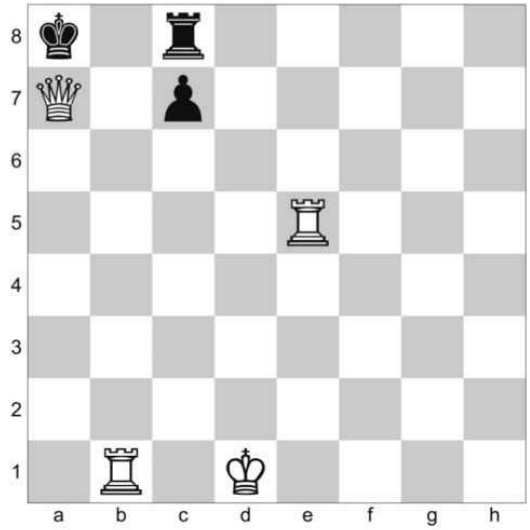


Diagram 51:

Example of sacrifice—1

(the white queen is sacrificed)

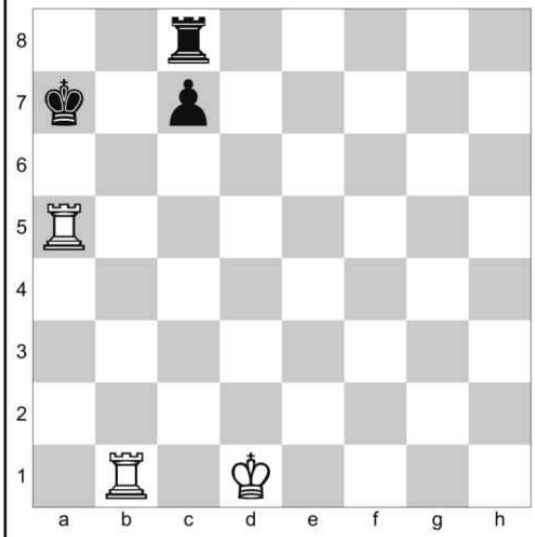


Diagram 52:

Example of sacrifice—2

(the white rooks can checkmate the king)

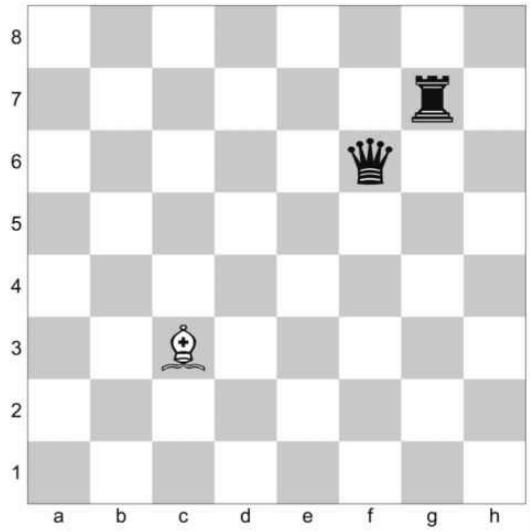


Diagram 53:
Example of relative skewer
(the white bishop threatens the queen protecting the rook)

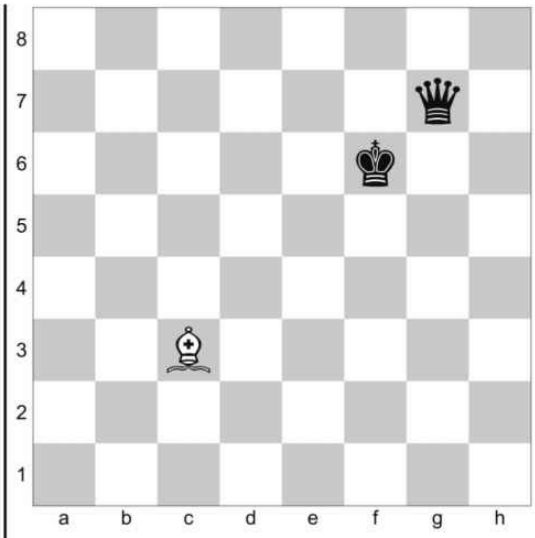


Diagram 54:
Example of absolute skewer
(the white bishop threatens the king protecting the queen)

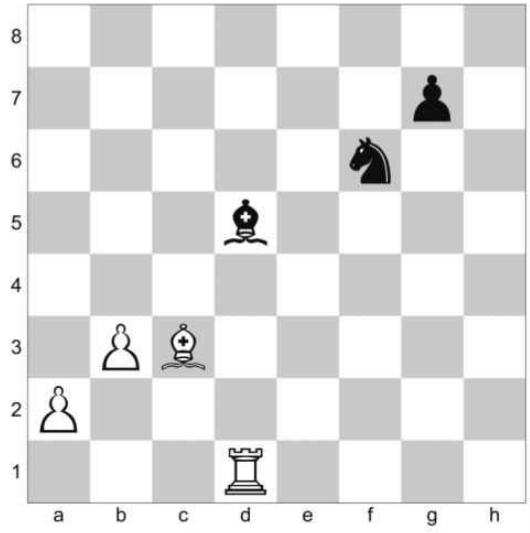


Diagram 55:
Example of undermining—1
(the white bishop captures the knight defending the bishop)

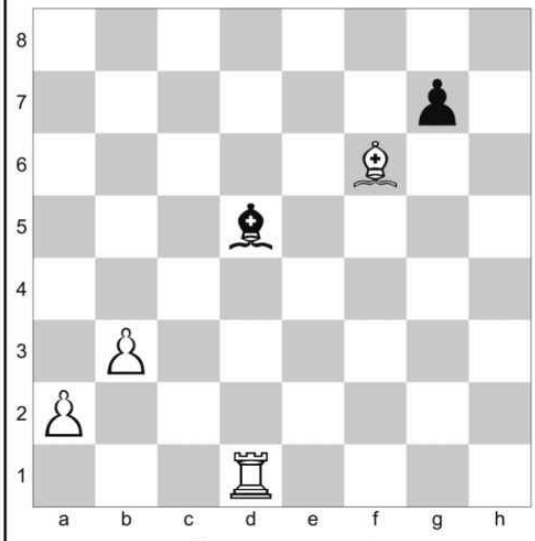


Diagram 56:
Example of undermining—2
(the black bishop is now defenseless and can be safely captured by the rook)

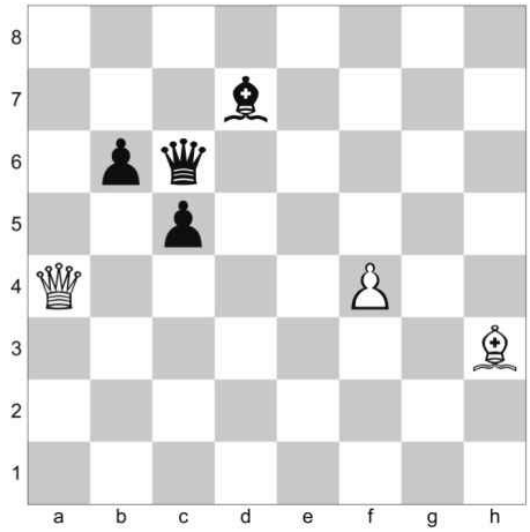


Diagram 57:

Example of x-ray attack

(the white bishop attacks the black one because it is supported by the queen through the black one)

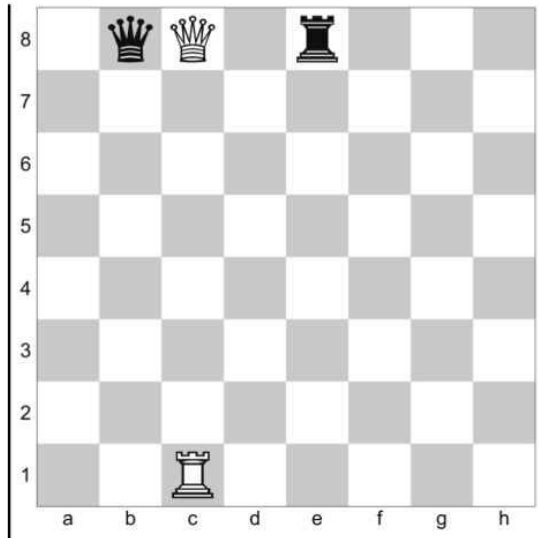


Diagram 58:

Example of x-ray defense

(Black's queen and rook defend each other through the white queen)

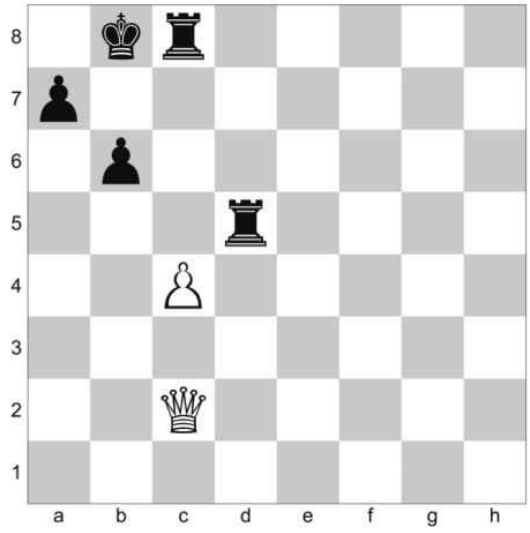


Diagram 59:

Example of zwischenzug—1

(White wants to capture the rook on *d5* with the pawn which is, however, pinned to the queen)

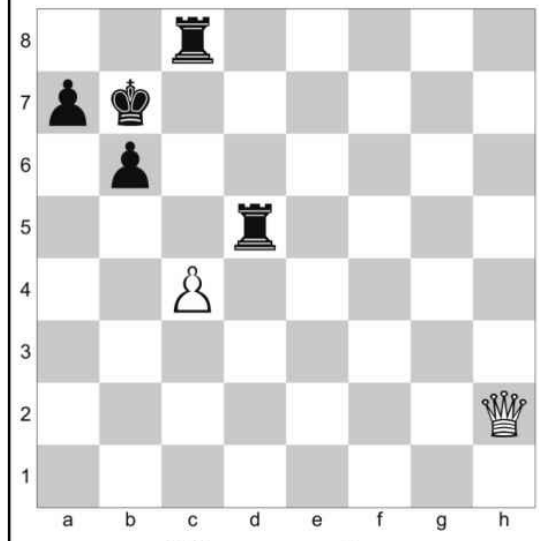


Diagram 60:

Example of zwischenzug—2

(the white queen checks on *h2*, Black moves the king on *b7*, and White can capture the rook on the following move)

Elements of Strategy

In chess, *strategy* is the study of long-term objectives and the planning of the way to achieve them, taking into account that, in the end, these are accomplished through tactics. Strategic plans are influenced by *static imbalances* that tend to last for several moves, such as a higher pieces value or a better pawn structure, and by *dynamic imbalances* that are temporary, such as a better pieces development. The main strategic elements to always keep in mind are deepened below.

Value

The *relative value of pieces* consists in assigning to the various pieces an indicative score (scoring system) helpful to outline the strategic weight in game and the one commonly accepted is: pawn = 1 / knight = 3 / bishop = 3 / rook = 5 / queen = 9. The king is either not assigned any value or is infinite, as its loss involves the defeat, but if it comes into play in the endgame is considered worth about 4 points. Calculating the value of pieces for each deployment becomes possible to evaluate a certain position effectively, holding however in consideration that this is also influenced by positional factors, for example, advanced pawns are worth more than those in the initial position, and by type of game, for example, in closed positions, knights are generally more effective than bishops, while in open ones is the opposite.

Development

The *pieces development* consists in strategically placing the pieces, occupying the most appropriate squares, so that they can exert the best influence on the game. A good development allows one to attack the opponent's pieces and simultaneously defend one's own. For this purpose, the pawns are tendentially placed first, followed by the knights and bishops, to control the central squares, and finally, the rooks and queen that, being long-range pieces, need more space to move.

Structure

The *pawn structure* (*diagram 61*) consists of the fundamental configuration of the pawns on the chessboard that, not being very mobile, has a significant impact on positional strategy. These structures, if not

compensated (for example, with the possibility of moving an attack), can give rise to weak points (weakness), generally permanent, such as *isolated*, *doubled*, *backward*, *overextended pawns* or *holes* (squares located in the area of influence of a player that a pawn cannot control).

Space

To *gain space* (*diagram 62*) consists in controlling a larger chessboard area than the opponent to gain an advantage and generally a wider choice of actions to be taken. Two very effective ways to gain space and influence the game are to push forward the pawn structure and control directly or indirectly the central squares of the chessboard.

Center

The *control of the center* (*diagram 63*) consists of dominating the central area of the chessboard, generally through its occupation. The centralized pieces, having greater mobility and effectiveness, can dominate more squares, move easily from one part to another of the chessboard and compress at the same time the opponent's game. Also, this allows one to build a barrier behind which to develop other pieces or create an *outpost* (an advanced square that is not controlled by an opponent's pawn, where to place a piece to launch an attack) for the later stages of the game (*diagram 64*). However, when a piece is centrally placed, it does not automatically mean that it controls the center, as in the case of a knight; in fact, it can be influenced from a distance, as in the case of a bishop. It is also to be considered that the main objective of chess openings is to control the center while developing pieces and specifically, in the *hypermodern* ones, to do so from a distance (*diagram 65*), for example, using the *fianchetto* (*little flank* in Italian, i.e., placing a bishop on the *b2*- or *g2*-square for White and *b7*- or *g7*-square for Black to control a long diagonal), and in the classical or modern ones, to occupy it with pawns.

Defense

To *defend pieces* consists of protecting oneself from possible future attacks by the opponent without necessarily waiting for a direct threat. In fact, to cover a piece at the last moment may not be possible or may cost a *tempo*, and identifying such a miss by the opponent is undoubtedly a weakness to

take advantage of. However, even a well-defended piece can be vulnerable, as in the case of overloading. In general, the defense should be adapted to the number of attacking pieces, and it is necessary to consider the need to cover the *key squares* (strategically important squares), *open files* (files clear from pawns), and *back lines*.

Safety

The *king safety* (*diagram 66*) consists of securing the king from possible threats, usually through castling on the right side and at the right moment, often behind a series of *connected* and *flanked pawns* (pawns placed on adjacent files).

Exchange

The *exchange* or *trade of pieces* consists in capturing an enemy piece, allowing the subsequent elimination of one of one's own. Usually, this occurs sequentially, exchanging pieces of the same value (even exchange). In this context, a better material exchange is defined as *going up the exchange* or *won the exchange*, such as winning a rook by losing a bishop, while a worse material exchange is defined as *going down the exchange* or *lost the exchange*, such as winning a knight by losing a rook. In general, exchanging pieces approaches the endgame phase and is often preferable for the player with more material as it limits the opponent’s chances to regain the disadvantage.

An exchange of pieces implemented to reduce the opponent’s offensive force, try to draw or gain an advantage over a strong player in the endgame with a simplified position is defined as *simplification* or *liquidation*.

Initiative

The *initiative* consists of making threats that the opponent cannot ignore. This means that the player who has the initiative attacks while the other defends. The result is that the opponent must necessarily use his turns, wasting *tempi*, trying to avoid the threats instead of playing his own game.

Material

The *material advantage* consists of maintaining a set of pieces stronger and more effective than the opponent to ensure better chances of victory. All

this is obviously based on the need to capture the enemy pieces, preserving as much as possible one's own. Usually, the player at a disadvantage of material plays for a draw and the other for the victory.

Position

In the middlegame, depending on the development of the opening phase, one can have an *open position* or a *closed position*.

An *open position* (*diagram 67*) consists of the scarce presence of central pawns, clear diagonals, and at least one file clear from pawns, generally leading to a violent clash, fast exchanges, and a rapid conclusion of the game.

A *closed position* (*diagram 68*) consists of the almost total presence of the pawns and their strong structure, generally leading to a clash set on the defensive, with complex maneuvers and very long.

First move

The *first-move advantage* consists of the theoretical advantage that White would have by moving first and consequently to the disadvantage that Black would have at the beginning of the game by having to close this gap. There are discordant opinions on the integrity of the thesis just described; in fact, the theorists in favor argue that, under statistical data collected over time, White wins more often than Black (52−56% of the time), while those against argue that this derives essentially from a limiting psychological factor and therefore from an incorrect perception of the game dynamics. The most recent hypotheses even affirm the opposite that is precisely the second player to be favored because the first would be forced to reveal in advance his plans. In the final analysis, it can be said that the imbalance between the two players, if effectively present, is reduced or simply disappears as the game progresses, and is, therefore, to be kept in mind, but does not represent a real strategic problem to be morbidly worried about.

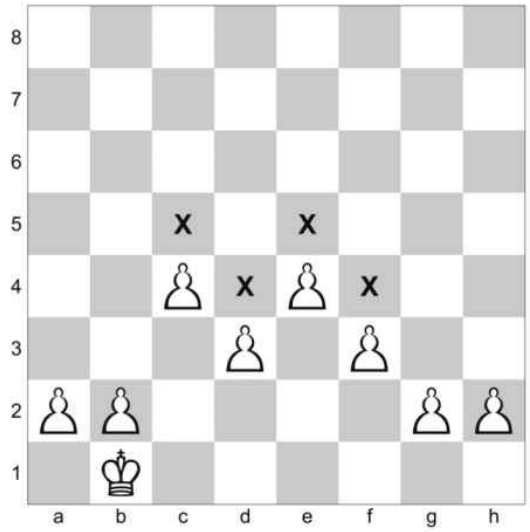


Diagram 61:

Example of pawn structure

(the holes identified by *x* are weaknesses in White's pawn structure)

Diagram 62:

Example of gain of space

(White has an advantage in space)

Diagram 63:

Example of control of the center

(Black has an advantage in the control of the center)

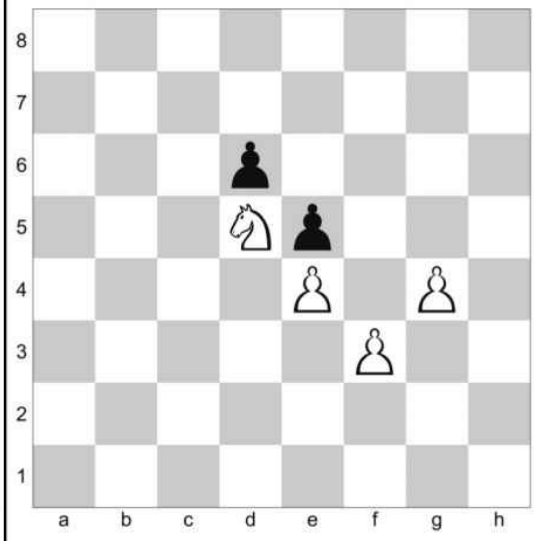


Diagram 64:

Example of outpost

(the knight occupies an outpost and blocks the black pawn on *d6*)

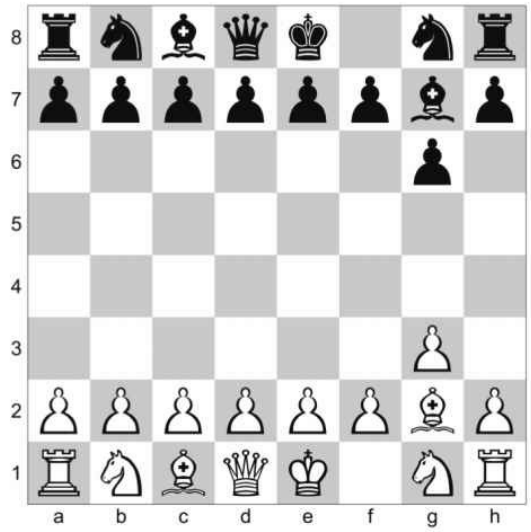


Diagram 65:
Example of fianchetto
(White on *g2* and Black on *g7*)

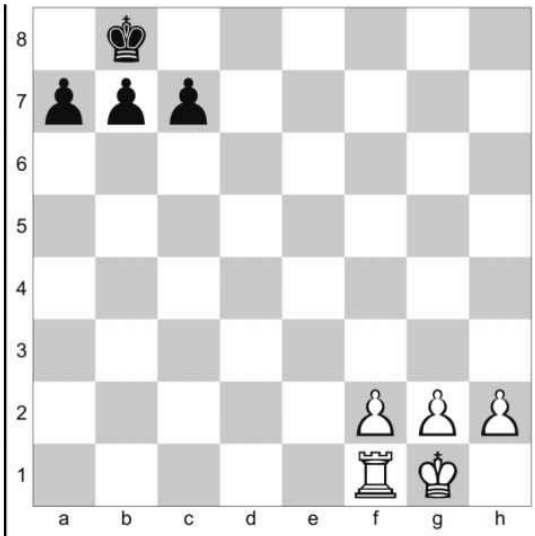


Diagram 66:
Example of king safety
(two ways to protect the king)

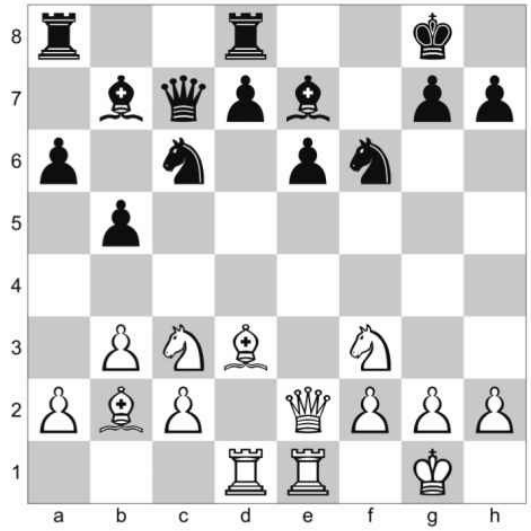


Diagram 67:
Example of open position

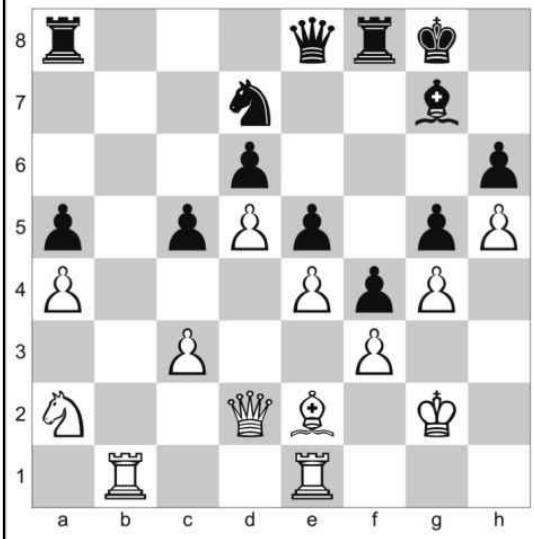


Diagram 68:
Example of closed position

Infantry Structure

The *pawn structure* or *pawn skeleton* is a fundamental component of the game and consists of the particular disposition of the pawns on the chessboard, without considering that of the other pieces. This includes a wide range of concepts, from characteristics of the single pawn to formations of groups of pawns.

The moves of the pawns compared to the other pieces are limited; consequently, the pawn structure results to be pretty static and decisive both from a tactical and strategic point of view, besides representing an essential aspect of the positional evaluation.

The structures are strong or weak, depending on which other pieces are present on the chessboard, and the simpler ones can be combined to create complex formations.

Generally, a pawn structure, according to the assumed conformation, can be divided as described below.

- *Open structure* (open game), which consists of many open lines with few pawns in the center (*diagram 69*). This leads to considerable mobility of the pieces and an extremely dynamic game.
- *Closed structure* (closed game), which consists of few open lines, almost all pawns, and little space to mobilize the pieces that tend to block each other (*diagram 70*). This situation is defined as *blocked position* because it leads the game to be set on the defensive and to become extremely slow.
- *Symmetrical structure*, which consists of the mirrored or very similar positioning of the pawns present in the two deployments (*diagram 71*). This involves considerable difficulty in breaking through the opponent’s position and in gaining an advantage.
- *Asymmetrical structure*, which consists of the concentration of a player’s pawns on one side of the chessboard (*diagram 72*). In the presence of even material, the players’ pawns are instead concentrated on the opposite sides of the chessboard. This generally involves the attempt to create a passed pawn or attacks aimed at weakening the opponent's pawn structure.

Some pawn structures often recur and have therefore received specific names. The main ones are deepened below.

Advanced Pawn

The *advanced pawn* (*diagram 73*) is a pawn placed in the opponent's half of the chessboard. This can be weak if not adequately supported (overextended) or strong if it creates pressure on the opponent by limiting his mobility. Moreover, it becomes very strong if, in addition to being advanced is also passed.

Backward Pawn

The *backward pawn* (*diagram 74*) is a pawn placed behind all other friendly pawns present on adjacent files that cannot advance safely. This is generally considered a disadvantage because, not being defended by other pawns, can become an easy target or see its front square occupied by an enemy piece. Additionally, it also weakens the pieces of the same deployment dedicated to its protection because they cannot be used for other purposes. Sometimes, such as in modern openings, one accepts a backward pawn to gain an advantage of another kind like initiative or better development of the other pieces.

Isolated Pawn

The *isolated pawn* (*diagram 75*) is a pawn that has no friendly pawns on adjacent files. This generally represents a weakness because, not being defended by other pawns, the frontal square can become a strategic place for the opponent to place a piece. Also, it becomes even weaker in the endgame to the scarcity of pieces that can defend it if necessary. However, it can provide a better development for other pieces in some cases because of clear files.

Passed Pawn

The *passed pawn*, *free pawn*, or *passer* (*diagram 76*) is a pawn that enemy pawns cannot hinder towards promotion. Therefore, there are no enemy pawns frontally placed on the same file and adjacent files. This puts pressure on the opponent because it requires his constant attention. Besides, it is often promoted to queen (queening) because it is the most powerful piece.

The *protected passed pawn* (*diagram 76*) is a passed pawn defended by friendly pawns. When two or more passed pawns are placed on adjacent files,

these are called *connected passed pawns* (*steamroller* if in pairs) and represent a very strong formation because it is difficult to block.

The *outside passed pawn* (*diagram 76*) is a passed pawn that, separated by a certain number of files from the other friendly pawns, deflects the king or other pieces of the opponent from defending the enemy pawns. This is an advantage because the opponent's king is not able to cover both sides of the chessboard simultaneously.

The *unstoppable passer* (*diagram 76*) is a passed pawn with a clear frontal space to be safely promoted. This represents a considerable advantage in the endgame, if the opponent is only left with the king (outside the *square of the pawn*), or one can control the squares to cross to promote it.

Doubled Pawns

The *doubled pawns* (*diagram 77*) are two friendly pawns placed on the same file. These become so after one of the two has captured an enemy piece on the file of the other. They are generally considered a weakness because they are unable to protect each other and sometimes be also defended by other pieces. Even in the offensive phase, they are not effective because unable to form an extended front. Moreover, in the presence of two doubled and isolated pawns, this disadvantage further increases; in fact, some strategies and openings have precisely the objective of weighing the opponent of these kinds of problems. In some cases, an advantage of this structure is represented by the possibility of opening a line of attack for other pieces or defending important squares. Occasionally formations of *tripled* and *quadrupled pawns* can occur, but these are rare cases.

Connected Pawns

The *connected pawns* (*diagram 78*) are two or more pawns of the same deployment placed on adjacent files. These are more effective when flanked because they can control the weak squares of each other, becoming more difficult for the opponent to block them. The formation is already present in the initial phase of the game, being broken to allow the other pieces development, and generally represents an excellent defense for the king both after castling and in the endgame.

Hanging Pawns

The *hanging pawns* (*diagram 79*) are two flanked and half-isolated pawns (usually on the fourth rank) placed on adjacent and half-open files. These, not being directly protected by friendly pawns, can become a target but can also create a passed pawn.

Chain

The *pawn chain* (*diagram 80*) consists of a series of connected pawns diagonally placed on adjacent files. It is formed by a point or vertex, a base, and one or more intermediate *rings*. This represents the formation of greater complexity and importance, besides the fact that a large part of the positional evaluations is based on its presence, conformation, and length. The longest chains *cut* the chessboard diagonally, defining real zones of influence, and in this configuration, every pawn, except the base, is defended. They are created in many openings and constitute a barrier that limits the action of the pieces; also, when they arrive at the edges provide great protection to the king. They can be attacked at the base (weakest point), at the vertex (most dangerous point), or broken. Interesting is their capability to mobilize the pieces to certain areas of the chessboard, provide an advantageous room for manoeuvre and form an important mass of breakthrough.

Islands

The *pawn islands* (*diagram 81*) consist of several isolated pawns or groups of pawns separated by a certain number of files (open or half-open). The pawn islands are already created in the initial phase of the game by opening a file. They represent a disadvantage only if a player is forced to defend them simultaneously; an aspect accentuated in the endgame for lack of material. To find oneself with pawn islands is less serious than having a single isolated pawn.

Wedge

The *wedge formation* (*diagram 82*) is a configuration of three pawns, two of which are lateral, on the same rank, and one central, ahead of a square. This formation is quite strong and valid in the offensive phase because the point is well defended and can control important opponent's squares limiting their activity. In the defensive phase, it is quite solid, as long as one controls the squares in front of the pawns at the base. The weak point of the wedge is

precisely its base that must be adequately protected.

Stonewall

The *stonewall formation* (*diagram 83*) is a configuration opposite to the wedge: a pawn at the base and two points. This structure is one of the best in the defensive phase, especially against other pawns. In the offensive phase, controlling a good number of squares is more effective than wedge, but it can turn into two isolated pawns after an exchange.

Majority

The *pawn majority* (*diagram 84*) consists of a greater number of one player's pawns than the other on one side of the chessboard. Instead, a central majority of pawns consists of a greater number of pawns on the central files. When not compromised (doubled or backward pawns), this formation has a good chance of ensuring a passed pawn. Moreover, a player should attack the side where his majority resides (because it is stronger), but an exception to this principle is the *minority attack*. The *minority attack* is an attack launched by a player with pawns on the opponent's side where his *minority* (the opposite of the majority) resides to provoke a weakness in the enemy's position.

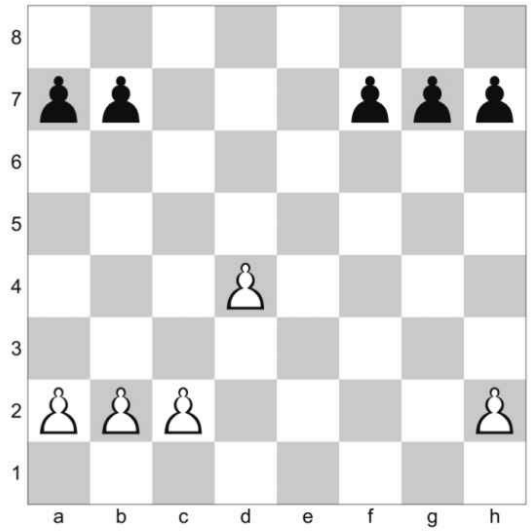


Diagram 69:
Example of open pawn structure

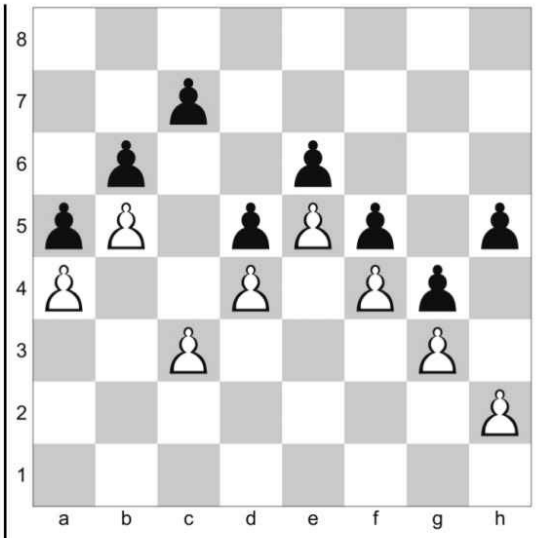


Diagram 70:
Example of closed pawn structure

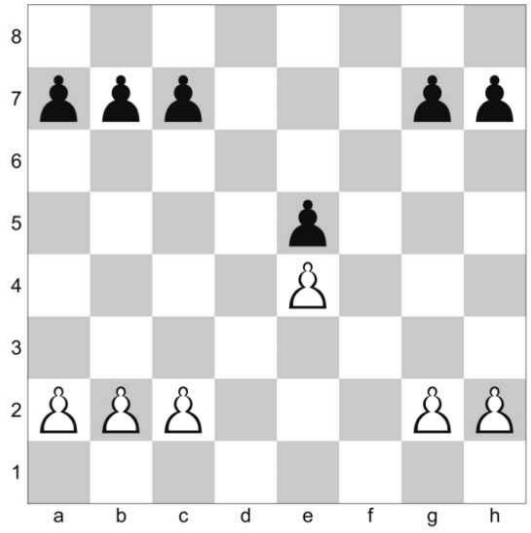


Diagram 71:
Example of symmetrical pawn structure

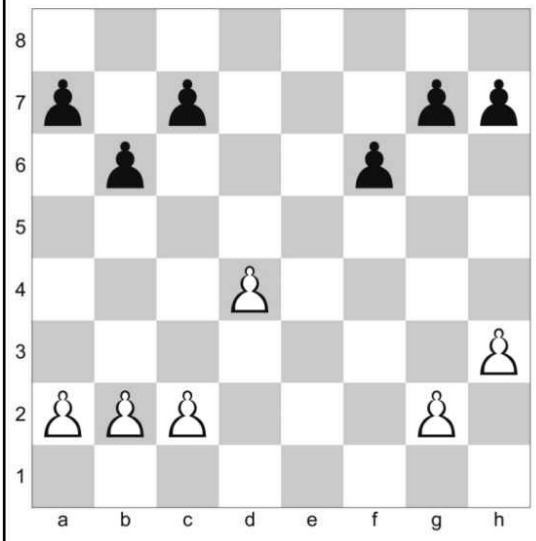


Diagram 72:
Example of asymmetrical pawn structure

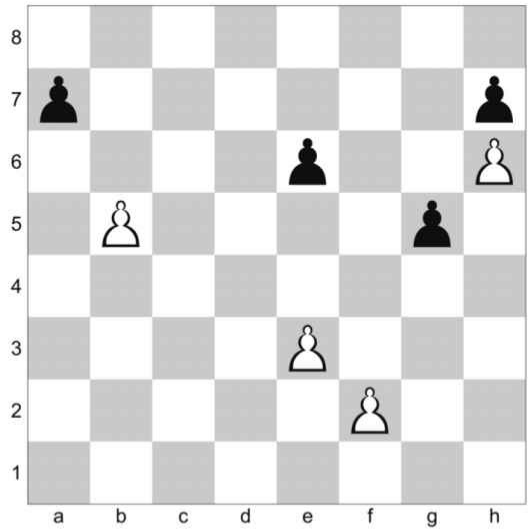


Diagram 73:
Example of advanced pawn
(pawns on *b5* and *h6*)

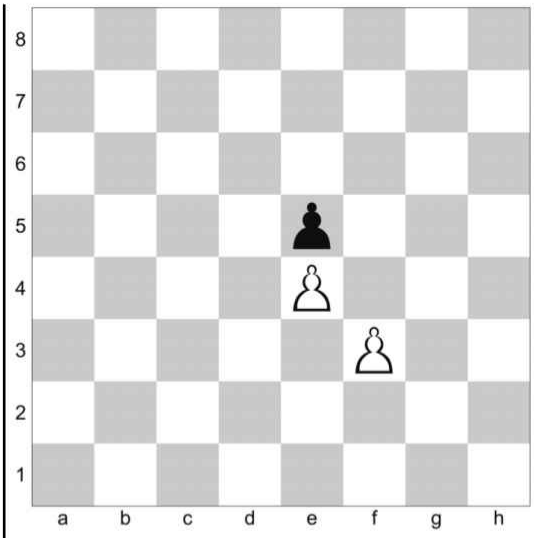


Diagram 74:
Example of backward pawn
(pawn on *f3*)

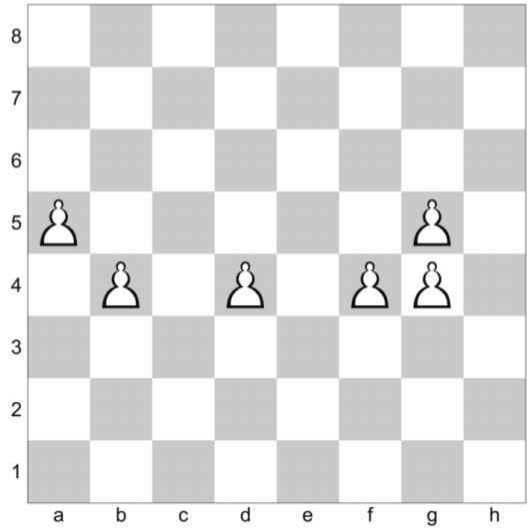


Diagram 75:
Example of isolated pawn
(pawn on *d4*)

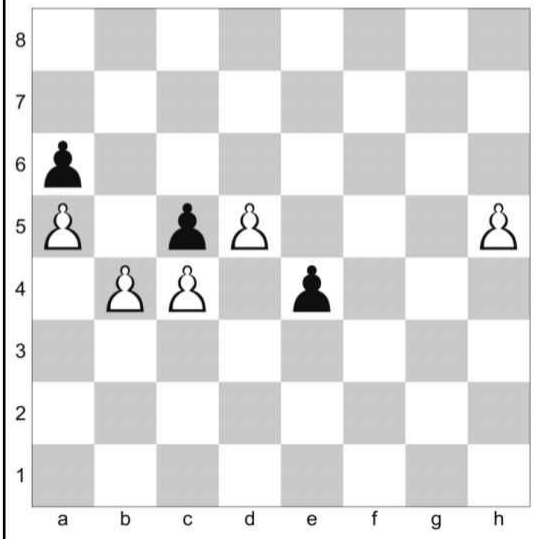


Diagram 76:
Example of types of passed p.
(passed pawns on *d5* and *h5*,
protected passed pawn on *d5*,
outside passed pawn on *h5*,
unstoppable passed p. on *h5*)

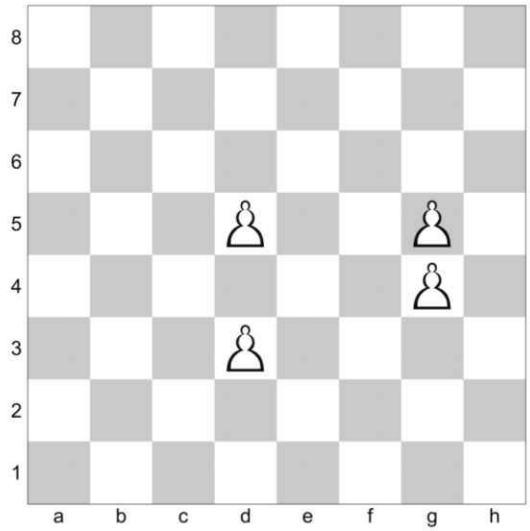


Diagram 77:
Example of doubled pawns
(pawns on *d*-, *g*- files)

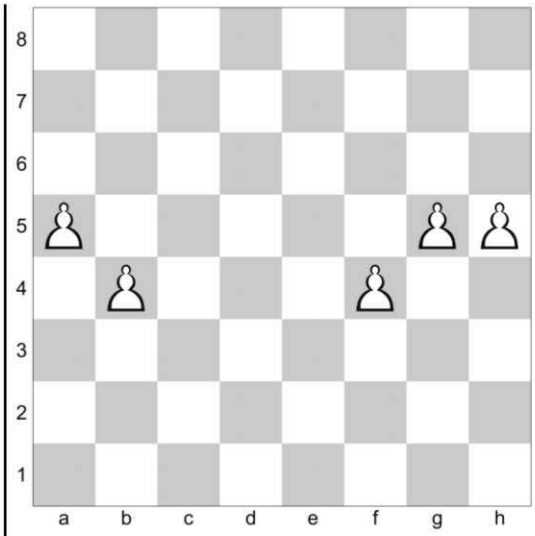


Diagram 78:
Example of connected pawns
(pawns on *a5*, *b4* and
pawns on *f4*, *g5*, *h5*)

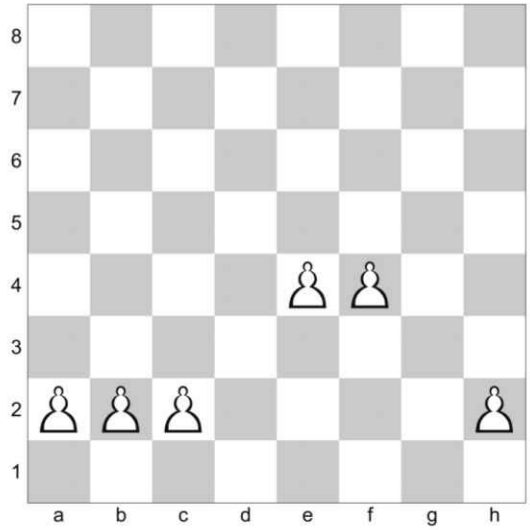


Diagram 79:
Example of hanging pawns
(pawns on *e4*, *f4*)

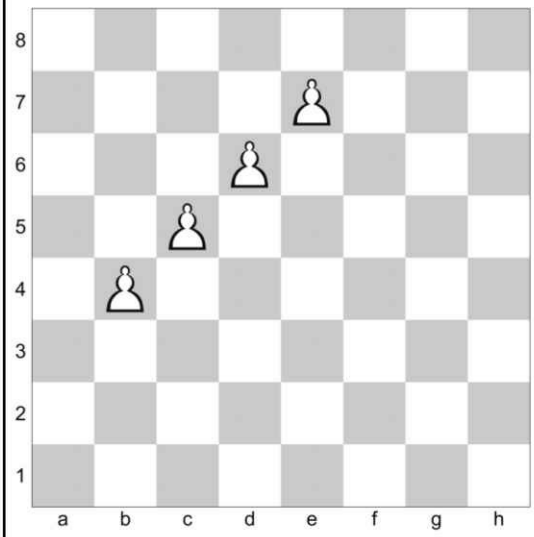


Diagram 80:
Example of pawn chain

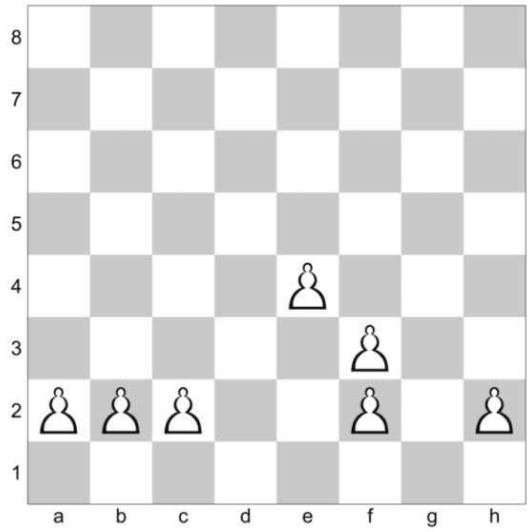


Diagram 81:
Example of pawn islands
(three pawn islands)

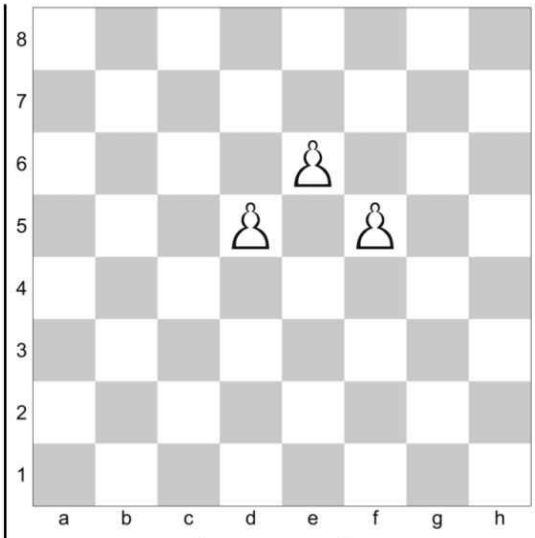


Diagram 82:
Example of wedge formation

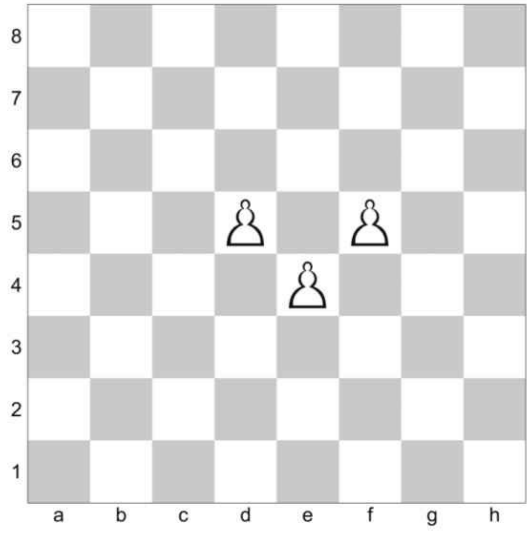


Diagram 83:
Example of stonewall formation

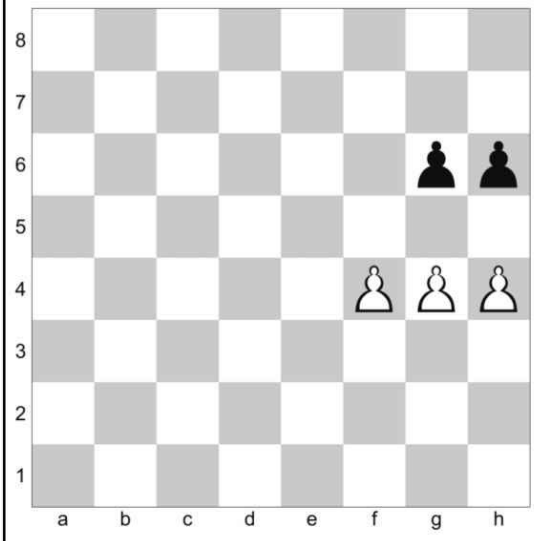


Diagram 84:
Example of pawn majority
(White's majority and
Black's minority)

Phases of the Clash

From a theoretical point of view, every game can be divided into three phases: *opening*, *middlegame*, and *endgame*. In the opening phase, groups of moves, called *openings*, are used to obtain an initial advantage over the other player, then follows the middlegame phase, where tactics are used to simplify the game, and in conclusion, the endgame phase, where the purpose is to checkmate the opponent. These three phases are described below in their main aspects, and under their fundamental importance, both the opening and endgame are deepened in more detail in the following chapters.

Opening

The *opening* (*diagram 85*) is the first and most important phase of the game, aimed at developing the pieces and contrasting the disposition of those opponents. It does not have a precise duration, but generally, it is considered concluded within 10−20 moves. The gains of space, position, and pieces obtained at the beginning significantly determine the development of the middlegame and the course of the game as a whole. For this purpose, the minor pieces are usually moved first, followed by the major ones. Besides, it should be pointed out that there is no *a priori* winning opening and that victory always comes from better taking advantage of opponent's mistakes. Specifically, the main strategic objectives of the opening are the development and coordination of pieces, control and occupation of the center, king safety, and construction of a good pawn structure (all topics already discussed above). In addition, the player must come to specialize, selecting over time a certain number of openings (opening repertoire) and creating positions in which he is comfortable, for example, through *transposition*.

The *transposition* consists in reaching a certain position with an alternative sequence of moves compared to the classical ones (e.g., same final position obtained both with the series of moves *1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6* and with *1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.d4 d5*), usually used to avoid unpleasant variations and confuse the opponent.

The number of significant openings and their variants is remarkable (several hundred), and they are all cataloged in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* (ECO) that collects the best theoretical studies and whose system of classification is universally recognized. Each opening is identified by an

ECO code consisting of a capital letter (from *A* to *E*) that indicates the group, a two-digit number (from *00* to *99*) that indicates the subgroup, and an additional two-digit number that indicates the specific variant, while the individual moves are written according to the usual algebraic notation.

Given their importance for the players, in the course of history, the opening possibilities plus the variants that can occur have been thoroughly analyzed and grouped with precision, giving rise to a characteristic nomenclature. This subdivision provides the assignment to each opening of the player's name who first performed it in a tournament or of the place where it was studied for the first time or of the place where it was initially played. Other times, the names are descriptive or particularly imaginative. In some cases, the openings can have more than one name, and these can vary a lot from one language to another. To further integrate the nomenclature, a specific type of game is also indicated among those that can be initially set and that are divided into:

- *Game*, a term that identifies some of the oldest openings;
- *Opening*, when the game system is set by White;
- *Variation*, a term that identifies an alternative sequence of moves of a general opening;
- *Defense*, when the game system is set by Black;
- *Gambit*, when one or more pawns are sacrificed in exchange for a gain of space or time;
- *Countergambit*, when a gambit is played in response to the opponent's one (almost always by Black);
- *System*, a term that identifies a development method that can be used against different opponent's settings;
- *Attack*, a term that identifies an aggressive variation or a defensive system of White, sometimes used only for ironic purposes;
- *Reversed* or *inverted*, a term identifying an opening of Black played by White or an opening of White played by Black.

A different way of classification consists instead of distinguishing the various openings according to White's first move:

- *King's Pawn Openings*, i.e., all openings that have as White's first move *1.e4*;
- *Queen's Pawn Openings*, i.e., all openings that have as White's first move *1.d4*.

Or also considering the first response of Black (most used

methodology):

- *Open Games*, characterized by the moves *1.e4 e5*;
- *Semi-Open Games*, characterized by the moves *1.e4* with a different response from *1...e5*;
- *Closed Games*, characterized by the moves *1.d4 d5*;
- *Semi-Closed Games*, characterized by the moves *1.d4* with a different response from *1...d5*;
- *Flank openings*, the most common openings among those in which White's first move is different from both *1.e4* and *1.d4*;
- *Irregular openings*, characterized by White's first move or by a Black's response statistically unusual.

Middlegame

The *middlegame* (*diagram 86*) is the phase following the opening and preceding the endgame. This does not have clear boundaries but is considered begun when the development of the pieces and the setup of the pawn structure are completed, ending when the game is sufficiently simplified to be considered an endgame. The middlegame theory is less developed than that of the opening and endgame because the positions that are created are unique, and the presence of a large number of pieces does not allow to make complete analysis. Generally, the players' objectives in this situation are to exploit the most interesting opportunities created during the opening maneuvers to threaten the enemy king, create favorable combinations or simply lead to an advantageous endgame. Depending on the initial choices of the players, the middlegame can take on a character in which the tactical aspect predominates over the strategic one or vice versa.

Endgame

The *endgame*, *end game*, or *ending* (*diagram 87*) is the conclusive phase of the game that begins at the end of the middlegame, i.e., when, after the captures, remains a small number of pieces on the chessboard. It has three strategic aspects that differentiate it from the other phases, and these are described below.

- The two kings no longer have either the necessity or the possibility to remain safe and therefore enter the game.
- The pawns increase considerably in importance since the clear

chessboard allows them to attempt promotion.

- The *zugzwang* (*diagram 88*) becomes a relevant factor. The *zugzwang* (*compulsion to move* in German) consists of a situation in which there are no possible advantageous moves, and in any case, the player is forced to suffer a loss of material or the checkmate.

Other important factors to consider are described below.

- The situation in which a player remains only with the king, called *bare king* or *lone king* (*diagram 89*). The player with the bare king can only aim for a draw. If both players are left only with the king or one of them has a bishop or a knight, the game automatically ends in a draw.
- The situation in which the player at a material disadvantage employs a technique to draw called *fortress* (*diagram 90*), i.e., the particular placement around the king of the remaining pieces to create an impenetrable protection zone for the opponent.
- The *rule of the square* or *square of the pawn* (*diagram 91*) that consists of the chessboard area inside which the king must position itself to reach, without the interference of other pieces, an enemy pawn that is attempting promotion. The rule of the square states that a pawn can always be promoted if, as it moves forward, the opponent's king remains outside the square of which the pawn itself is a vertex and whose side is given by the distance of the pawn from the promotion square.
- The *key squares* (*diagram 92*), especially relevant in pawn endings. A *key square* or *critical square* is a square that, when occupied by one of the two kings, can force the achievement of a certain objective, such as the promotion of a pawn or capture of an opponent's pawn.
- The pairs of reciprocal *zugzwang* squares, defined as *corresponding*/*relative*/*sister*/*coordinate squares* that, especially in pawn endings, force the movements of a king compared to the opponent's one to maintain a certain position (*diagrams 93 and 94*).
- The *opposition* (*diagram 95*) that can lead the opponent to access important squares. The opposition is a particular type of *zugzwang*; generally, it consists of the position of the two kings facing each other, separated by a single square, which occurs especially in pawn endings. The opposition is defined as *direct* when the two kings are separated by only one square on the same file or rank, as *distant* when separated

by several squares on the same file or rank, or as *diagonal* when they are on the same diagonal.

- In some endgames, the situation in which a bishop, defined as *wrong* or *wrong-colored bishop* (*diagram 96*), moves on the squares of the wrong color to obtain a certain result and, therefore, cannot control those of the opposite color.
- In the endgames in which there is a bishop and a rook's pawn that attempts promotion, this can be a *wrong rook pawn* (*diagram 97*) according to the capacity or not of the bishop to control the promotion square of the pawn (situation closely correlated to the previous point).
- The recognition and implementation of *mate patterns* (*diagram 98*), i.e., schemes of checkmate that regularly occur in ending, each with distinctive characteristics and specific names (more on this later).

As for openings also endgames are being studied and analyzed. These are classified depending on the value and number of pieces left on the chessboard, and the subdivision commonly accepted (deepened later) is the following:

- *Elementary endings*;
- *Pawn endings*;
- *Minor pieces endings*;
- *Queen endings*;
- *Rook endings*;
- *Endings with no pawns*.

Generally, in the simpler endings, the result of the game is often a foregone conclusion, but in the unbalanced ones the disadvantaged player tries to draw.

Also, with the development of technology, it has been possible to create databases, called *tablebases*, containing all the possible developments of an endgame but, because of the enormous number of possible combinations, only of a limited number of pieces. *Tablebases* are normally used to research endgames or as an aid for chess engines.

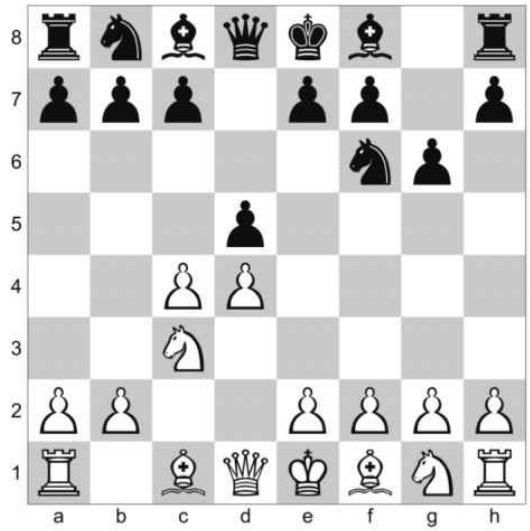


Diagram 85:
Example of opening
(initial phase of the game)

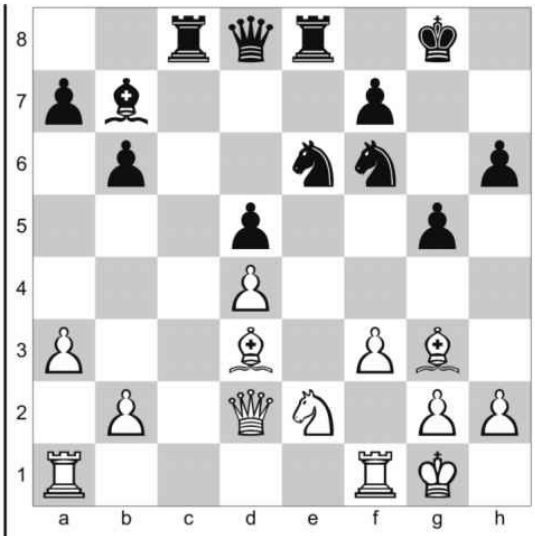


Diagram 86:
Example of middlegame
(intermediate phase of the game)

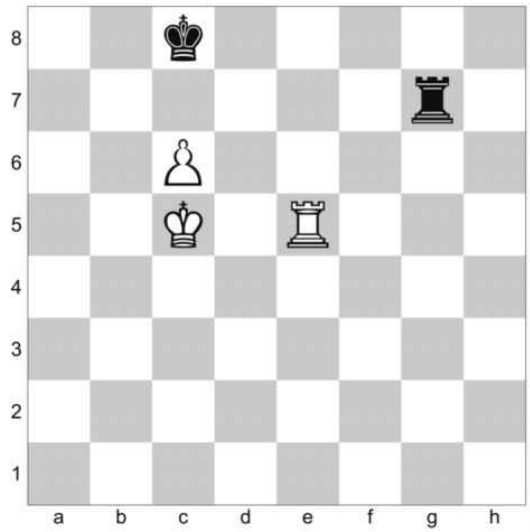


Diagram 87:
Example of endgame
(final phase of the game)

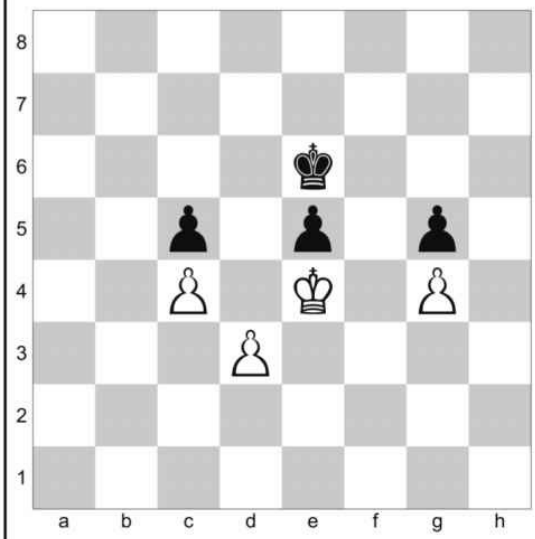


Diagram 88:
Example of zugzwang
(any move by Black allows White to create a passed pawn and win)

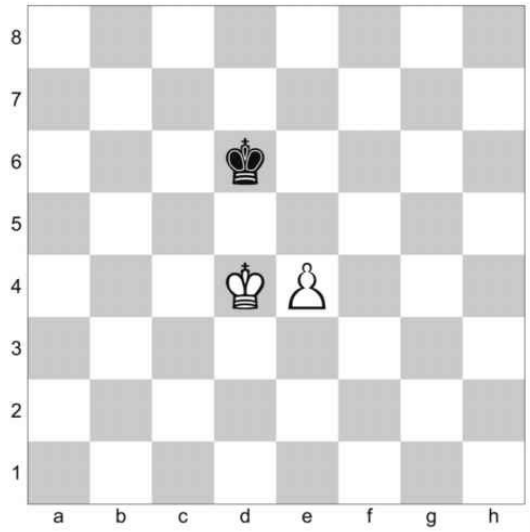


Diagram 89:

Example of bare king

(Black is at a disadvantage and plays to draw)

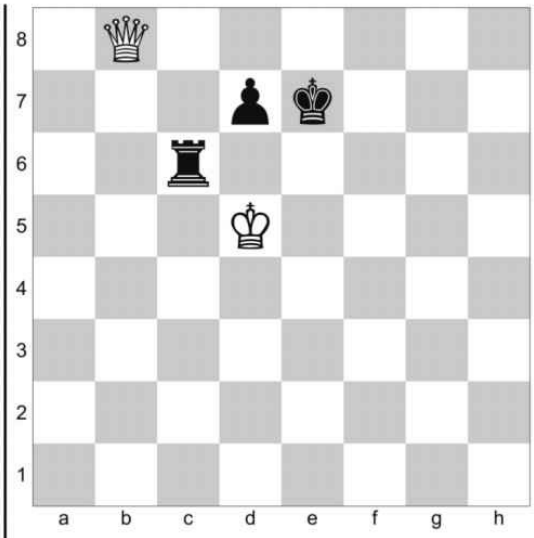


Diagram 90:

Example of fortress

(Black has built a fortress and increased his chances of drawing)

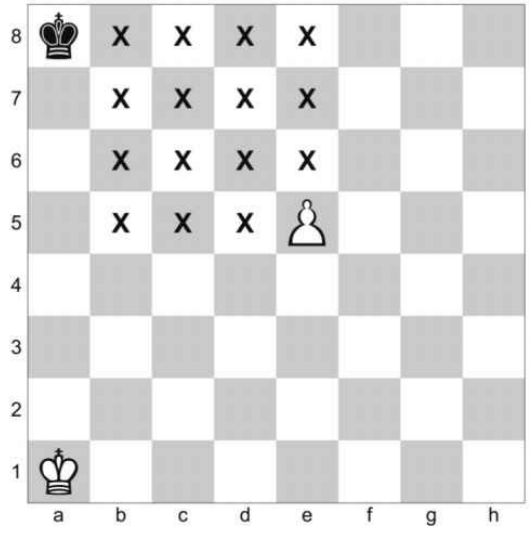


Diagram 91:

Example of square of the pawn

(the area expressed by the rule is identified by *x*)

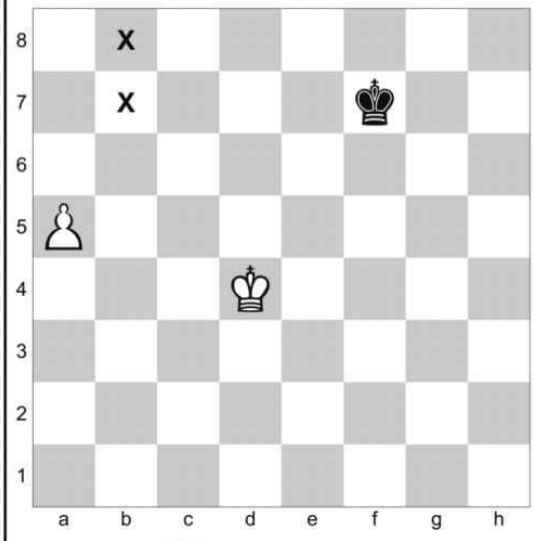


Diagram 92:

Example of key squares

(if the white king reaches *b7* or *b8*, it can promote the pawn, keeping the black king away)

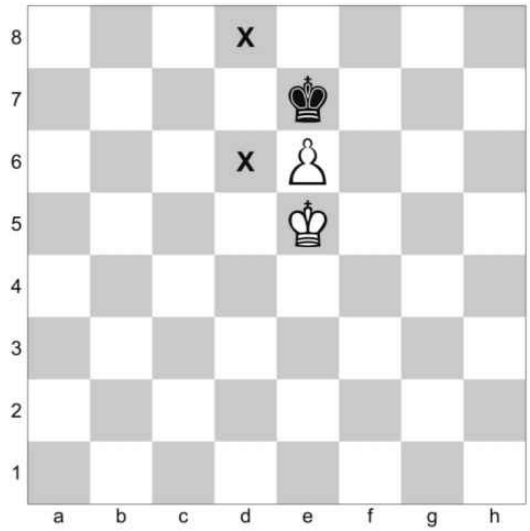


Diagram 93:
Example of corresponding squares—1
(if the black king moves to *d8*, the white king moves to *d6* and wins)

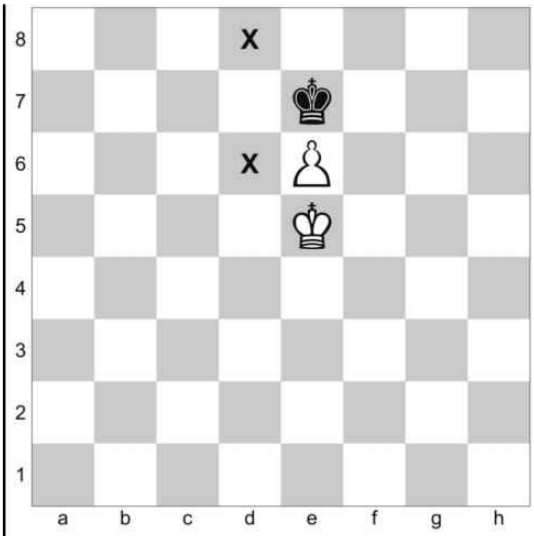


Diagram 94:
Example of corresponding squares—2
(if the white king moves to *d6*, the black king must move to *d8* to draw)

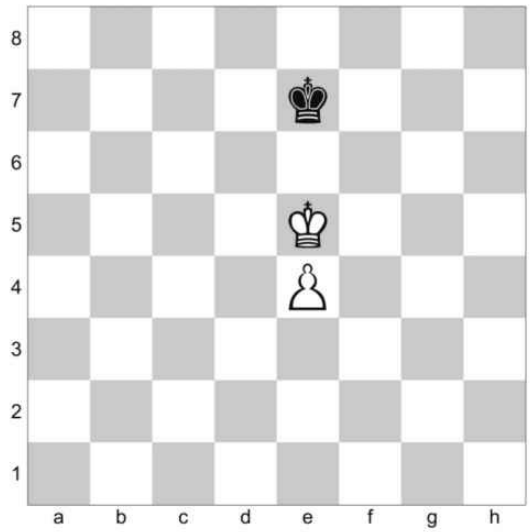


Diagram 95:
Example of direct opposition
(if White moves, Black draws, and if Black moves, White wins)

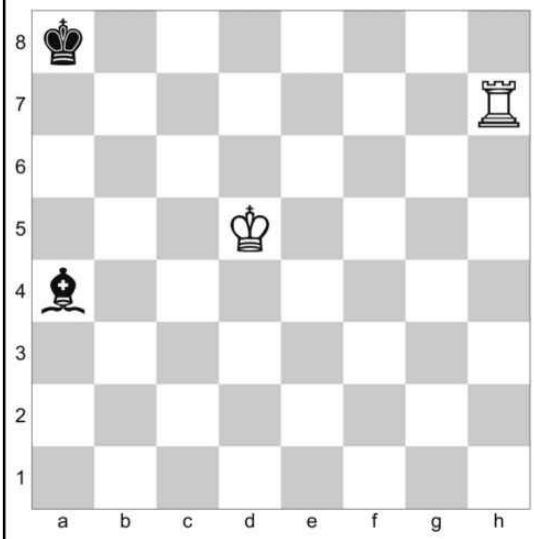


Diagram 96:
Example of wrong bishop
(White wins because Black has a wrong bishop)

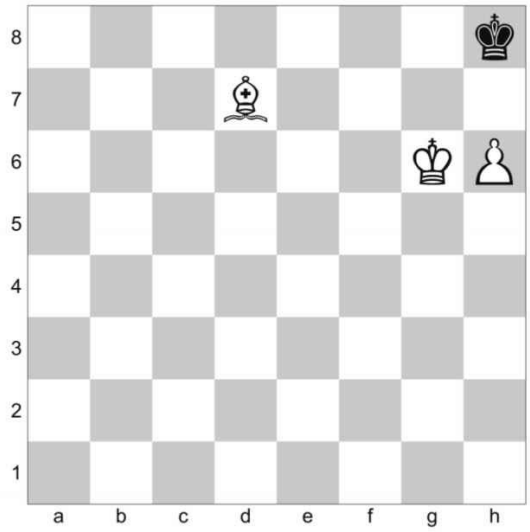


Diagram 97:
Example of wrong rook pawn
(whether White moves or Black moves, the game is a draw because of the wrong bishop)

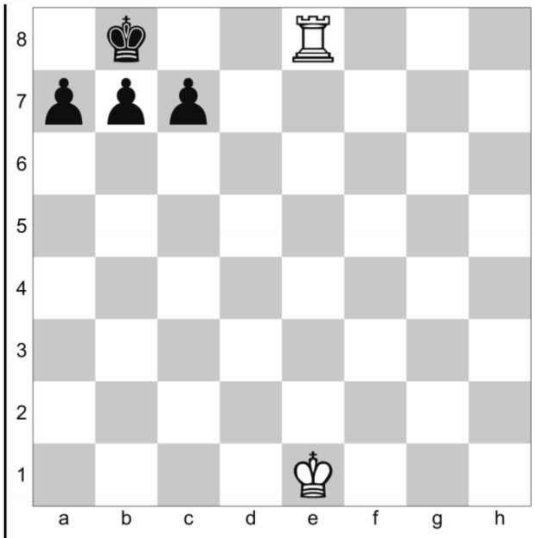


Diagram 98:
Example of checkmate pattern
(White wins with the *back-rank mate*)

Initial Phase

It follows the discussion of some of the *most interesting openings* (listed in alphabetical order) divided by the type of game, accompanied by the ECO code of reference and the relative sequence of moves. Those most important and played for each category (great for beginners) are underlined and represented in the diagrams present at the end of the chapter. In addition, some key concepts have been repeated and expanded for greater clarity.

Open Games

The *Open Games* or *Double King's Pawn Openings* are characterized by White's first move *king's pawn on e4* (King's Pawn Opening) and the symmetrical Black's response *king's pawn on e5*. The main objectives are to immediately control the center and clear the lines for the queen and bishop. The most famous opening of this group is the *King's Gambit*. The selection of the most interesting Open Games is listed below.

- Portuguese Opening (C20): 1.e4 e5 2.Bb5
- Bishop's Opening (C23→C24): 1.e4 e5 2.Bc4
- Lopez Opening (C20): 1.e4 e5 2.c3
- Danish Gambit (C21): 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Bc4
- Center Game (C21→C22): 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Qxd4
- King's Gambit (C30→C39): 1.e4 e5 2.f4 (*diagram 99*)
- Vienna Game (C25→C29): 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3
- Alapin's Opening (C20): 1.e4 e5 2.Ne2
- Elephant Gambit (C40): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d5
- Philidor Defense (C41): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6
- Latvian Gambit (C40): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5
- Damiano Defense (C40): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f6
- Ruy Lopez (C60→C99): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 (*diagram 100*)
- Evans Gambit (C51→C52): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.b4
- Italian Game (C50→C59): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 (*diagram 101*)
- Giuoco Piano (C50→C54): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3
- Hungarian Defense (C50): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Be7

- Two Knights Defense (C55→C59): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
- Ponziani Opening (C44): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.c3
- Scotch Game (C44→C45): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4
  (*diagram 102*)
- Konstantinopolsky Opening (C44): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.g3
- Three Knights Game (C46): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Bb4
- Four Knights Game (C47→C49): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6
- Petrov's Defense (C42→C43): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6
- Greco Defense (C40): 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Qf6
- Napoleon Opening (C20): 1.e4 e5 2.Qf3
- Danvers Opening (C20): 1.e4 e5 2.Qh5

Semi-Open Games

The *Semi-Open Games* or *Single King Pawn Openings* are characterized by White's first move *king's pawn on e4* (King's Pawn Opening), and an asymmetrical Black's response, i.e., different from *king's pawn on e5*. The most famous opening of this group is the *Sicilian Defense*. The selection of the most interesting Semi-Open Games is listed below.

- Corn Stalk Defense (B00): 1.e4 a5
- St. George Defense (B00): 1.e4 a6
- Owen's Defense (B00): 1.e4 b6
- Sicilian Defense (B20→B99): 1.e4 c5
  (*diagram 103*)
- Caro-Kann Defense (B10→B19): 1.e4 c6
  (*diagram 104*)
- Scandinavian Defense (B01): 1.e4 d5
- Pirc Defense (B07→B09): 1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6
  (*diagram 105*)
- French Defense (C00→C19): 1.e4 e6
  (*diagram 106*)
- Fred Defense (B00): 1.e4 f5
- Barnes Defense (B00): 1.e4 f6
- Borg Defense (B00): 1.e4 g5
- Modern Defense (B06): 1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7
- Goldsmith Defense (B00): 1.e4 h5
- Carr Defense (B00): 1.e4 h6

- Lemming Defense (B00): 1.e4 Na6
- Nimzowitsch Defense (B00): 1.e4 Nc6
- Alekhine's Defense (B02 → B05): 1.e4 Nf6
- Adams Defense (B00): 1.e4 Nh6

Closed Games

The *Closed Games* or *Double Queen Pawn Openings* are characterized by White's first move *queen's pawn on d4* (Queen's Pawn Openings) and the symmetrical Black's response *queen's pawn on d5*. The main objectives are those of the Open Game, with the difference of leaving the pawn less exposed due to protection offered by the queen. The most famous opening of this group is the *Queen's Gambit*. The selection of the most interesting Closed Games is listed below.

- London System (D00): 1.d4 d5 2.Bf4
- Queen's Gambit (D06→D69): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 (*diagram 107*)
- Baltic Defense (D06): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Bf5
- Symmetrical Defense (D06): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c5
- Slav Defense (D10→D19): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 (*diagram 108*)
- Queen's Gambit Accepted (D20→D29): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 (*diagram 109*)
- Albin Countergambit (D08→D09): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e5
- Queen's Gambit Declined (D30→D69): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 (*diagram 110*)
- Chigorin Defense (D07): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6
- Marshall Defense (D06): 1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nf6
- Blackmar-Diemer Gambit (D00): 1.d4 d5 2.e4
- Richter-Veresov Attack (D01): 1.d4 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5

Semi-Closed Games

The *Semi-Closed Games* or *Single Queen Pawn Openings* are characterized by White's first move *queen's pawn on d4* (Queen's Pawn Openings) and an asymmetrical Black's response, i.e., different from *queen's pawn on d5*. The most famous openings of this group are included in the very large subcategory defined as *Indian systems* that start with *1.d4 Nf6*, in which

substantially Black aims to eliminate the solid central presence of White. The selection of the most interesting Semi-Closed Games is listed below.

- Polish Defense (A40): 1.d4 b5
- Old Benoni Defense (A43→A44): 1.d4 c5 2.d5
- Wade Defense (A41→A04): 1.d4 d6 2.Nf3 Bg4
- Englund Gambit (A40): 1.d4 e5
- English Defense (A40): 1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6
- Keres Defense (A40): 1.d4 e6 2.c4 Bb4+
- Dutch Defense (A80→A99): 1.d4 f5
  (*diagram 111*)
- Queen's Knight Defense (A40): 1.d4 Nc6
- Indian Systems (A45→A79 / D70→D99 / E00→E99): 1.d4 Nf6
- Trompowsky Attack (A45): 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5
- Benoni Defense (A43→A44 / A56→A79): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5
- Benko Gambit (A57→A59): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5
- Modern Benoni (A60→A79): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6
- Old Indian Defense (A53→A55): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6
- Budapest Gambit (A51→A52): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5
- Catalan Opening (E00→E09): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3
  (*diagram 112*)
- Nimzo-Indian Defense (E20→E59): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4
  (*diagram 113*)
- Queen's Indian Defense (E12→E19): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6
  (*diagram 114*)
- Bogo-Indian Defense (E11): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+
- Blumenfeld Counterg. (E10): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.d5 b5
- King's Indian Defense (E60→E99): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7
  (*diagram 115*)
- Grünfeld Defense (D70→D99): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5
  (*diagram 116*)
- Black Knights' Tango (A50): 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Nc6
- Torre Attack (A46): 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bg5
- Colle System (D05): 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c3 d5 4.Nbd2
- London System (D02, A46, A48): 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4

Flank Openings

The *flank openings* are characterized by White's first move different from both *king's pawn on e4* and *queen's pawn on d4* with a game set on one or both flanks (lateral files). The main objective is to control the center with non-pawn pieces from the sides (hypermodernism). The selection of the most interesting flank openings is listed below.

- Larsen's Opening (A01): 1.b3
- English Opening (A10→A39): 1.c4
  (*diagram 117*)
- Bird's Opening (A02→A03): 1.f4
- Zukertort Opening (A04→A09): 1.Nf3
- Réti Opening (A04→A09): 1.Nf3 d5 2.c4
  (*diagram 118*)

Irregular Openings

The *irregular openings* are characterized by the first move for White (A00) or Black (B00) statistically unusual. These have undergone over time a revaluation, and many have become standard but remain, on the whole, not much played. White's most interesting unusual openings are listed below, while Black's most interesting unusual responses are included in the Semi-Open Games (see code B00).

- Anderssen's Opening (A00): 1.a3
- Ware Opening (A00): 1.a4
- Sokolsky Opening (A00): 1.b4
- Saragossa Opening (A00): 1.c3
- Mieses Opening (A00): 1.d3
- Van't Kruijs Opening (A00): 1.e3
- Barnes Opening (A00): 1.f3
- King's Fianchetto Opening/Benko's Opening (A00): 1.g3
- Grob's Attack (A00): 1.g4
- Clemenz Opening (A00): 1.h3
- Desprez Opening (A00): 1.h4
- Durkin Opening (A00): 1.Na3
- Dunst Opening (A00): 1.Nc3
- Amar Opening (A00): 1.Nh3

Diagram 99:
Example of
King's Gambit
(1.e4 e5 2.f4)

Diagram 100:
Example of
Ruy Lopez
(1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5)

Diagram 101:
Example of
Italian Game
(1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6
3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3)

Diagram 102:
Example of
Scotch Game
(1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4)

Diagram 103:
Example of
Sicilian Defense
(1.e4 c5)

Diagram 104:
Example of
Caro-Kann Defense
(1.e4 c6)

Diagram 105:
Example of
Pirc Defense
(1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6)

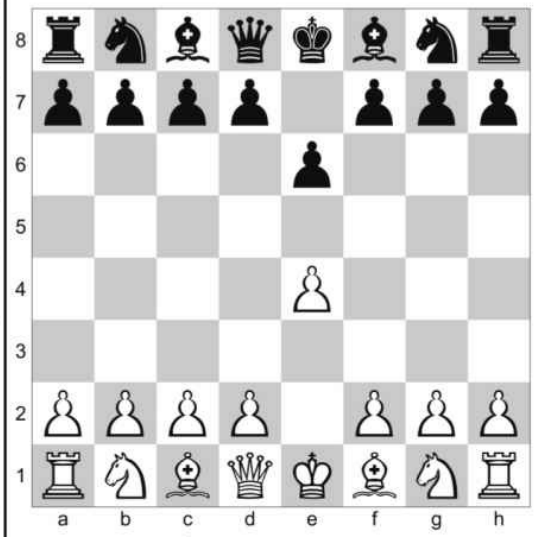


Diagram 106:
Example of
French Defense
(1.e4 e6)

Diagram 107:
Example of
Queen's Gambit
(1.d4 d5 2.c4)

Diagram 108:
Example of
Slav Defense
(1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6)

Diagram 109:
Example of
Queen's Gambit Accepted
(1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4)

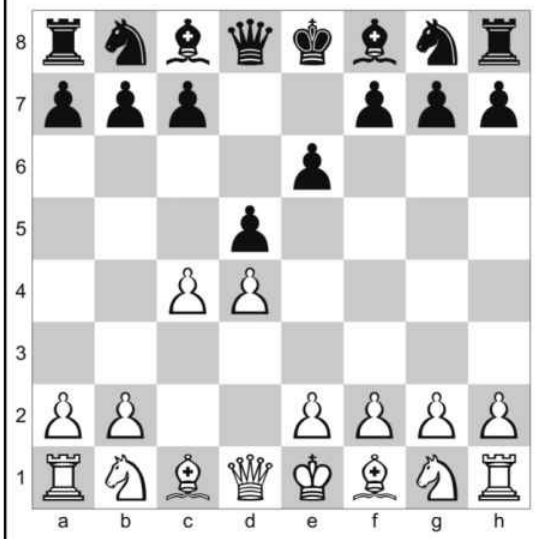


Diagram 110:
Example of
Queen's Gambit Declined
(1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6)

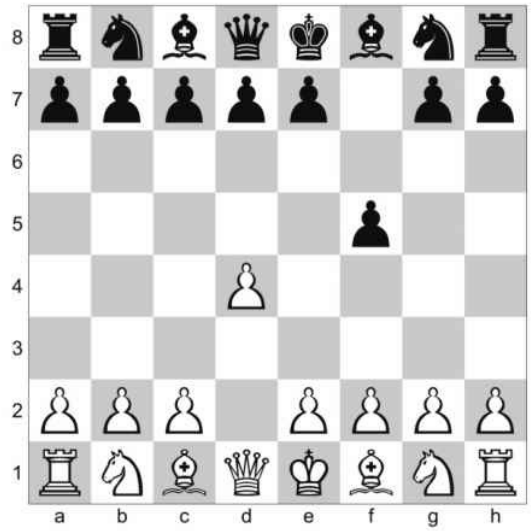


Diagram 111:
Example of
Dutch Defense
(1.d4 f5)

Diagram 112:
Example of
Catalan Opening
(1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3)

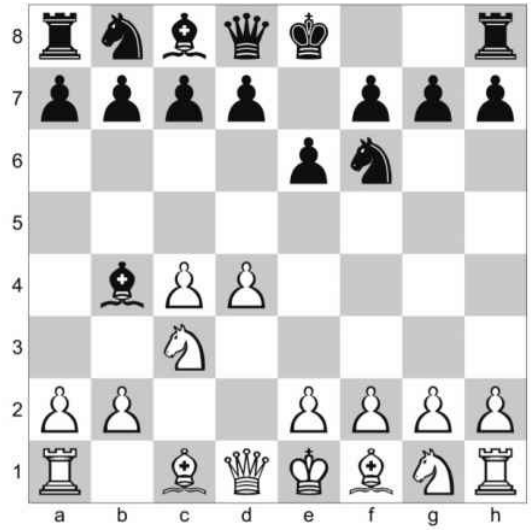


Diagram 113:
Example of
Nimzo-Indian Defense
(1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4)

Diagram 114:
Example of
Queen's Indian Defense
(1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6)

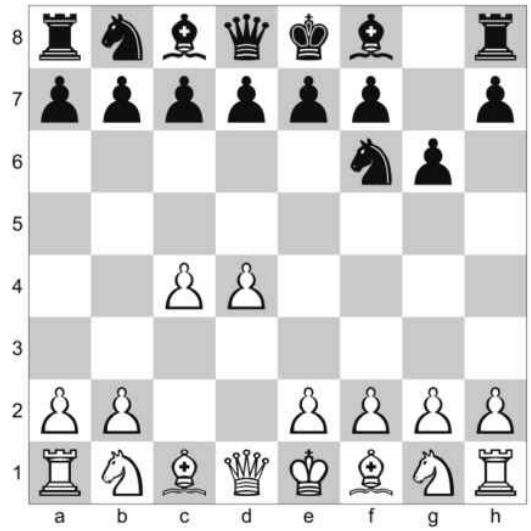


Diagram 115:
Example of
King's Indian Defense
(1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7)

Diagram 116:
Example of
Grünfeld Defense
(1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5)

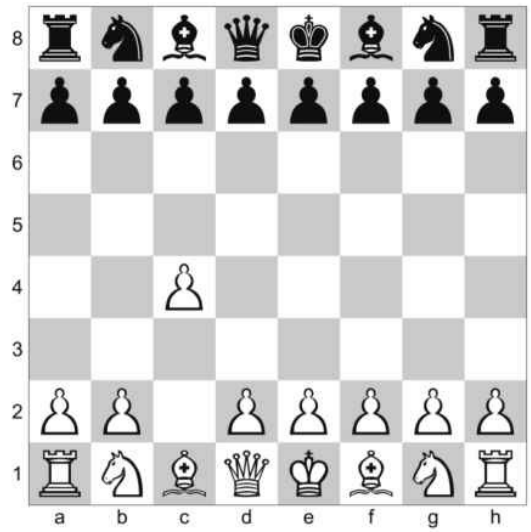


Diagram 117:
Example of
English Opening
(1.c4)

Diagram 118:
Example of
Réti Opening
(1.Nf3 d5 2.c4)

Final Phase

It follows the deepening of the various *types* of *endgames* previously seen. It is also reminded that endgames are defined as *won* if the player ahead can force checkmate while they are defined as a *draw* if the player at a disadvantage can avoid it. The symbology used in the next paragraphs is the following: + = same deployment and *vs*. = against.

Elementary Endings

The *elementary* or *basic endings*, which beginners should learn by heart, represent the simplest category since intuitive winning strategies characterize them, and these are described below.

- *King vs. king* (*diagram 119*) is an endgame drawn because the king cannot get within range of the opponent's one.
- *King + queen vs. king* (*diagram 120*) is an endgame always won because the queen, with the help of the king, has a sufficient range to force checkmate.
- *King + knight*/*king + bishop vs. king* (*diagram 121*) are both endgames drawn because it is not possible to force checkmate due to the limited range of the pieces.
- *King + rook vs. king* (*diagram 122*) is an endgame always won because the rook, with the help of the king, has a sufficient range to force checkmate.
- *King + bishop vs. king + bishop* (*diagram 123*) is an endgame drawn with bishops on opposite-colored squares (*bishops on opposite colors* or *opposite-colored bishops*), but if one of the two players makes a mistake, he can cause the checkmate.
- *King + 2 bishops vs. king* (*diagram 124*) is an endgame always won because the two bishops (bishop pair), with the help of the king, have sufficient range to force checkmate.
- *King + 2 knights vs. king* (*diagram 125*) is an endgame considered drawn because there is no way to force checkmate, but if the defender makes a mistake, he may suffer the checkmate in proximity to a corner of the chessboard.
- *King + bishop + knight vs. king* (*diagram 126*) is an endgame won using a perfect strategy, but the technique is complex and not easy to

implement.

Pawn Endings

The *pawn endings* represent a very large category, that sees the presence on the chessboard of the two kings and a variable number of pawns. For this reason, the main objective is to promote a pawn to obtain a decisive increase of material. Some emblematic examples are described below.

- *King + pawn vs. king* is an endgame in which the result depends on several factors, such as the square of the pawn, relative position of the two kings, and possession of the opposition.
- *King + 2 pawns vs. king* is an endgame often won because two pawns can force checkmate.
- *King + pawn vs. king + pawn* is an endgame generally drawn, although there are several positions in which one of the two players can force checkmate.
- *King + pawns vs. king + pawns* are very various endgames because there are several possible combinations of the number of pawns owned by the players and the type of position these have on the chessboard.

Minor Piece Endings

The *minor piece endings* are distinguished as described below.

- *Bishop endings* are endgames that favor the player with more pawns or initiative, while in the case of opposite-colored bishops often end in a draw.
- *Knight endings* are endgames generally characterized by the maneuvers of the knights to capture the opponent's pawns. To mention two emblematic examples, the endgame of *king + 2 knights vs. king* ends in a draw because a knight cannot lose *tempi* (once moved, it is no longer able to control the squares previously attacked), while the endgame of *king + 2 knights vs. king + pawn* for the player who has the two knights is won only in certain positions.

Queen Endings

The *queen endings* represent a complex category and characterized by the dominant role of the queen that, thanks to its great offensive capacity, is very insidious for the opponent's king. Two emblematic examples are described

below.

- *King + queen vs. king + pawn* is an endgame almost always won by the owner of the queen because he can check and simultaneously attack the pawn, forcing the king to make forced moves.
- *King + queen + pawn vs. king + queen* is a very difficult endgame to play and often a very long one because the defender must try to reach the promotion square with his king, but even if he doesn't succeed, he could still draw.

Rook Endings

The *rook endings* represent a category of endgames in which the two kings remain on the chessboard with only rooks and pawns, which generally end in a draw.

They are very frequent because the rooks are often the last to be put into play. Therefore, the central element is the activity of the rook, understood as the possibility of attacking both the king and opponent's pawns simultaneously or isolating the king to attack the pawns. Some emblematic examples are described below.

- *King + rook vs. king* is an endgame always won by the owner of the rook.
- *King + rook vs. king + 1 pawn* are endgames won by the owner of the rook or drawn, depending on the position of the two kings and the advancement of the pawn.
- *King + rook vs. king + 2 pawns* are endgames that can end with any result tending, however, to a draw or the victory of the owner of the pawns.
- *King + rook + pawn vs. king + rook* are the most analyzed and studied endgames because they are among the most frequent. The main objective is the promotion of the pawn, and if this happens, one normally switch to an endgame of *king + queen vs. king + rook*, generally won; otherwise, after the exchange of rooks, one switch to an endgame of *king + pawn vs. king*.
- *King + rook vs. king + other pieces* are endgames in which generally the rook can be at a disadvantage because it cannot alone force the victory against other pieces. If the rook is supported by another piece, like a bishop or a knight, the game is often a draw. In the case of *king + rook + minor piece vs. king + rook* is a draw, but the rook and

bishop can put in trouble the opponent. In the case instead of *king + rook + minor piece vs. king + minor piece*, it can be won but, requiring even more than fifty moves, it can border on a draw. In addition, the pair of rooks can win in most situations but lose against a queen.

Endings With No Pawns

The *endings with no pawns* represent a category in which there are no pawns but only pieces in both deployments. These are difficult to classify in a standard way or group according to common elements, because the number of pieces in play creates a very large number of different positions. However, they can be divided into *endings with equal material*, *a small material imbalance*, and *a large material imbalance* (analyzed below).

The *endings with no pawns with equal material* represent those endgames in which the two deployments have both the same number and the same type of pieces in play. The result is almost always a draw because no player can have a significant advantage of space or time on the other. Some emblematic examples are described below.

- *King + queen vs. king + queen* is an endgame almost always drawn, except in exceptional cases where one of the two kings is *stuck* in a *mating net* (position or series of moves that force checkmate) or suffers a check that leads to the capture of its queen.
- *King + rook vs. king + rook* is an endgame always drawn except when one of the rooks is *skewered* by the other.
- *King + minor piece vs. king + minor piece* is an endgame always drawn except in theoretical mate positions, such as *king + bishop vs. king + bishop* or with the presence of two knights because they are based on the possibility that a piece prevents the king from moving in case of check.

The *endings with no pawns with a small material imbalance* represent those endgames in which a player has either a few more pieces or a little more material value than the opponent. Some emblematic examples are described below.

- *King + queen vs. king + 2 rooks* is an endgame that can have any result.
- *King + rook vs. king + minor piece*; both the endgames of *king + rook*

vs. king + bishop and those of *king + rook vs. king + knight* are almost always drawn, except for some rare and unusual positions.

The *endings with no pawns with a large material imbalance* represent those endgames in which a player has either many more pieces or a material value much higher than the opponent. Some emblematic examples are described below.

- *King + queen vs. king + rook* is an endgame favorable to the owner of the queen, but the material advantage needs a precise play to be exploited.
- *King + queen vs. king + 2 minor pieces* are endgames in which the owner of the queen almost always obtains the victory because the two minor pieces generally cannot offer a decisive resistance. However, many positions can end in a draw, as in the case where the owner of the two pieces can build a fortress.
- *King + queen vs. king + over 2 minor pieces* are endgames that, in the case of *king + queen vs. king + 3 minor pieces*, generally, end in a draw, while in the case of four or more minor pieces, these can often win.

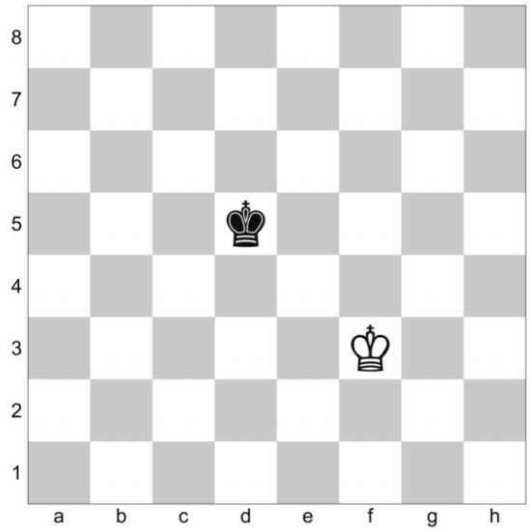


Diagram 119:
Example of elementary ending—1
(king *vs.* king)

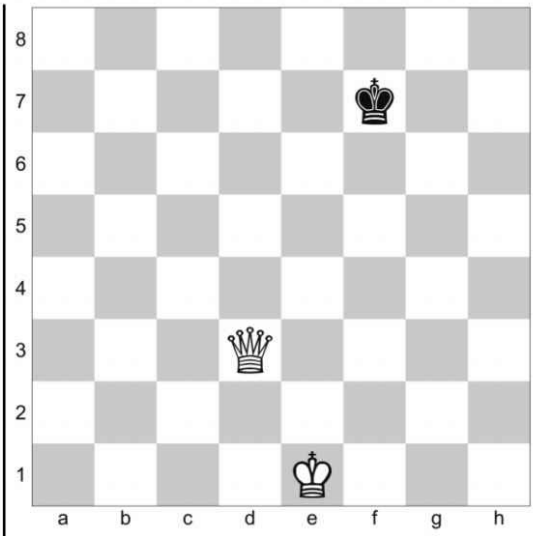


Diagram 120:
Example of elementary ending—2
(king + queen *vs.* king)

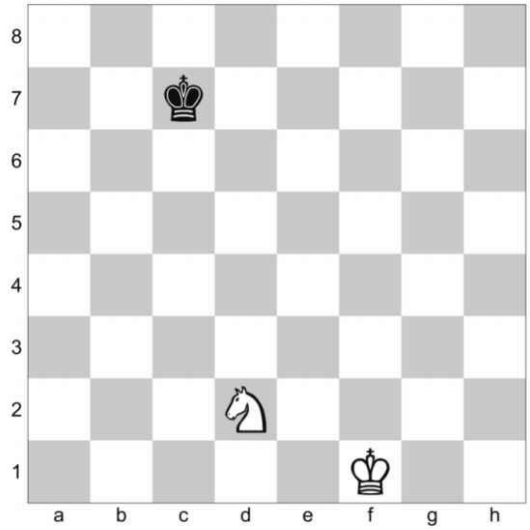


Diagram 121:
Example of elementary ending—3
(king + knight *vs.* king)

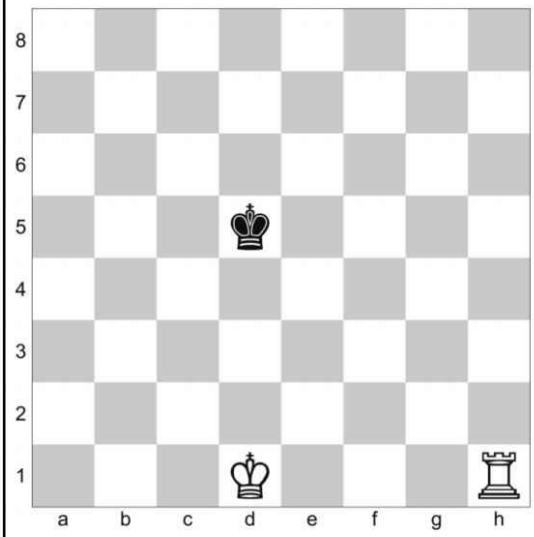


Diagram 122:
Example of elementary ending—4
(king + rook *vs.* king)

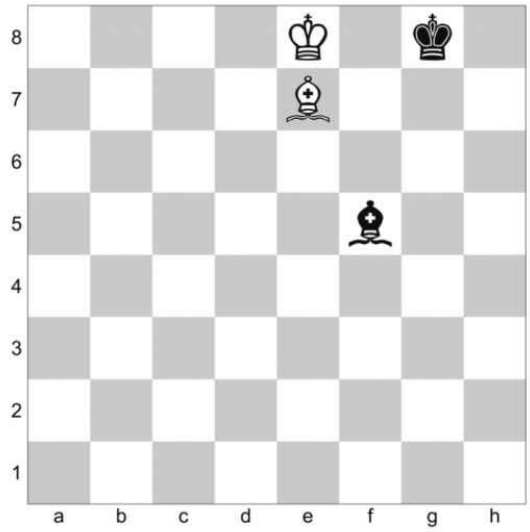


Diagram 123:
Example of elementary ending—5
(king + bishop *vs.* king + bishop)

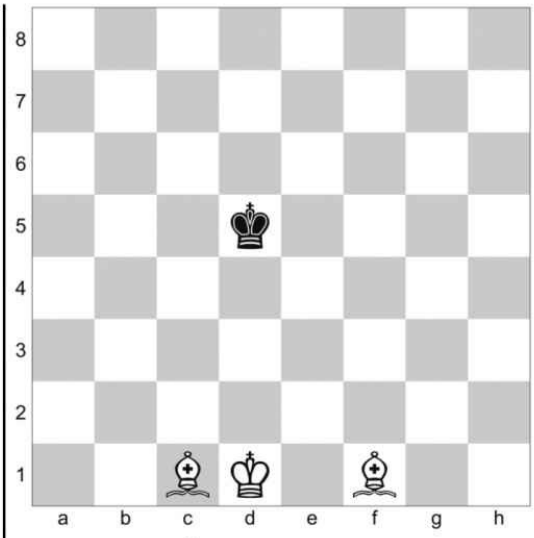


Diagram 124:
Example of elementary ending—6
(king + 2 bishops *vs.* king)

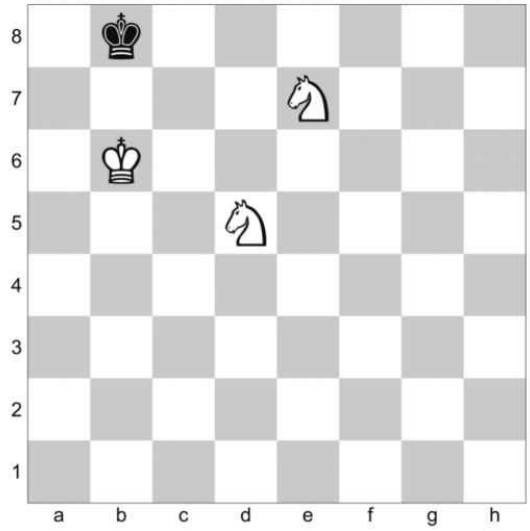


Diagram 125:
Example of elementary ending—7
(king + 2 knights *vs.* king)

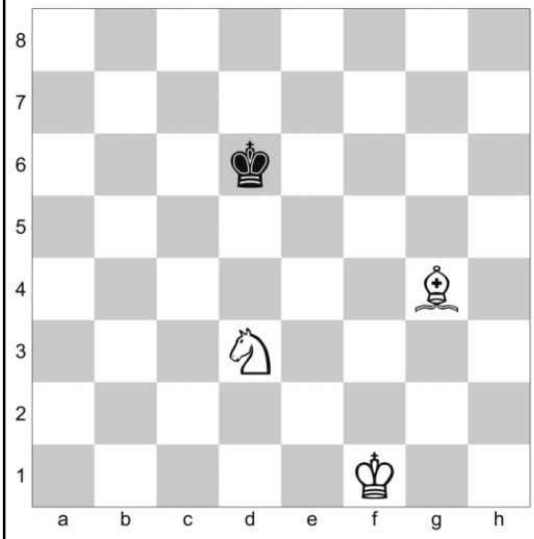


Diagram 126:
Example of elementary ending—8
(king + bishop + knight *vs.* king)

Mate Patterns

The *checkmate* or *mate patterns* are an organized sequence of moves that impose forced responses on the opponent, performed to obtain the checkmate. The simplicity of execution and sometimes the possibility of directly attacking the enemy king make them very effective in concluding the game in the shortest possible time. For example in *Fool's mate* and *Légal mate*, one can end the game in a few moves due to big mistakes made by the opponent.

There are hundreds of mate patterns, but some occur more frequently and have received specific names. Recognize them quickly or perform the best one at the right moment makes all the difference between a beginner and an experienced chess player.

The most interesting and studied classical combinations are deepened below and listed in alphabetical order, while the elementary ones, already mentioned above, are underlined.

- *Arabian mate* (*diagram 127*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king on a corner of the chessboard, using the knight and the rook together. The rook is placed on a square adjacent to that of the opponent's king to prevent its escape and deliver the mate. The knight is placed two squares diagonally away from the enemy king to prevent its escape and protect the rook.
- *Back-rank mate* or *corridor mate* (*diagram 128*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, blocked by friendly pieces (usually pawns), on the first or eighth rank, using a rook or the queen.
- *Bishop and knight mate* (*diagram 129*) is a *basic checkmate* and consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's lone king on a corner of the chessboard, using the king together with the bishop and the knight.
- *Boden's mate* (*diagram 130*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by friendly pieces, using the two bishops that attack from crossed diagonals.
- *Corner mate* (*diagram 131*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by a friendly pawn, on a corner of the chessboard, using a rook or the queen to confine it and a minor piece to deliver the mate.
- *Double bishop mate* (*diagram 132*) consists of delivering checkmate to

the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by a friendly pawn, using the bishops that control two adjacent diagonals.

- *Dovetail mate* or *Cozio's mate* (*diagram 133*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by friendly pieces, using the queen that attacks it from a diagonally adjacent square with the support of another piece.
- *Epaulette mate* (*diagram 134*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king (often on the last rank), trapped by friendly pieces placed on the two lateral flight squares, using the queen or a rook.
- *Fool's mate* or *two-move checkmate* (*diagram 135*) consists in the fastest checkmate of all starting from the initial position of the game. It is given by Black at the second move, using the queen, after a big mistake of White and is therefore very rare. The classic example is characterized by the moves: *1.f3 e5 2.g4 Qh4#*.
- *Greco's mate* (*diagram 136*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by an adjacent pawn, on one edge of the chessboard, using the queen or a rook supported by a bishop to contain it.
- *Kill box mate* (*diagram 137*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by an edge of the chessboard or friendly pieces, using a rook supported by the queen. In this case, the rook is on a square adjacent to that of the opponent's king, and the queen supports it at a distance of one square on the same diagonal, forming a 3x3 box.
- *King and two bishops mate* (*diagram 138*) is a *basic checkmate* and consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's lone king on a corner of the chessboard, using the king together with the two bishops.
- *Ladder mate* or *lawnmower mate* (*diagram 139*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king on one edge of the chessboard, using two major pieces together. In this case, the two major pieces push the opponent's king in turn into the mate position.
- *Légal mate* (*diagram 140*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king using the two knights and a bishop together.
- *Lolli's mate* (*diagram 141*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king using the queen, frontally placed and supported by a pawn in the sixth rank.
- *Morphy's mate* (*diagram 142*) consists of delivering a checkmate to

the opponent's king using a bishop to attack it and a rook with an enemy pawn to prevent its escape.

- *Opera mate* (*diagram 143*) consists in delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by a friendly piece, on the last rank, using a rook protected by a bishop.
- *Pawn mate* or *David and Goliath mate* (*diagram 144*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king using a pawn for the final attack while the other pieces control the flight squares.
- *Pillsbury's mate* (*diagram 145*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by friendly pieces, on one edge of the chessboard, using a rook to attack it and a bishop to prevent its escape.
- *Queen mate* (*diagram 146*) is a *basic checkmate* and consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's lone king on an edge or corner of the chessboard, using the king together with the queen.
- *Railroad mate* (*diagram 147*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king using the queen and a rook, placed one in front of the other and separated by a single rank or file forcing it inside two *tracks*. In this case, the queen and the rook together force the enemy king into the mate position, protecting each other.
- *Rook mate* or *box mate* (*diagram 148*) is a *basic checkmate* and consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's lone king on an edge or corner of the chessboard, using the rook and the king to block its escape towards the center.
- *Scholar's mate* or *four-move checkmate* (*diagram 149*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king on *f7* for White or *f2* for Black, using the queen protected by a bishop. A possible example is the one characterized by the moves: *1.e4 e5 2.Qh5 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Qxf7#*.
- *Smothered mate* (*diagram 150*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, surrounded by friendly pieces, using a knight.
- *Suffocation mate* (*diagram 151*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king using a knight to attack it and a bishop to block its escape.
- *Swallow's tail mate* (*diagram 152*) consists of delivering checkmate to the opponent's king, hindered in its escape by friendly pieces, using the queen protected by a rook or another piece.

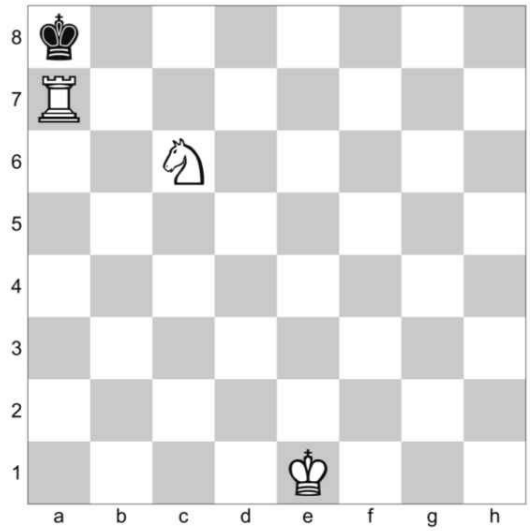


Diagram 127:
Example of
Arabian mate

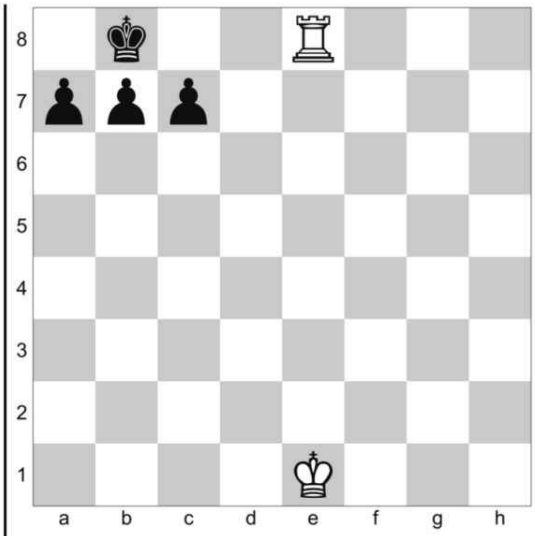


Diagram 128:
Example of
back-rank mate

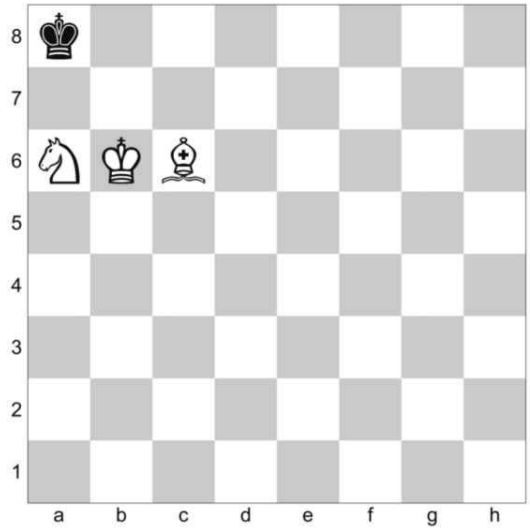


Diagram 129:
Example of
bishop and knight mate

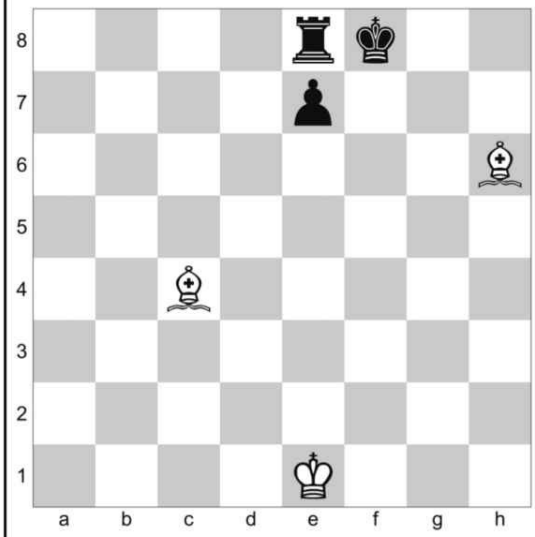


Diagram 130:
Example of
Boden's mate

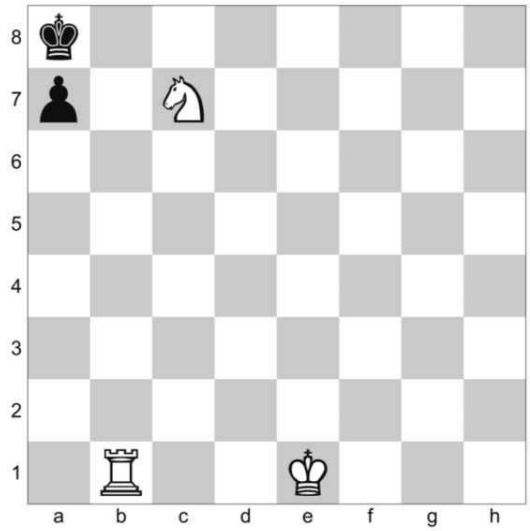


Diagram 131:
Example of corner mate

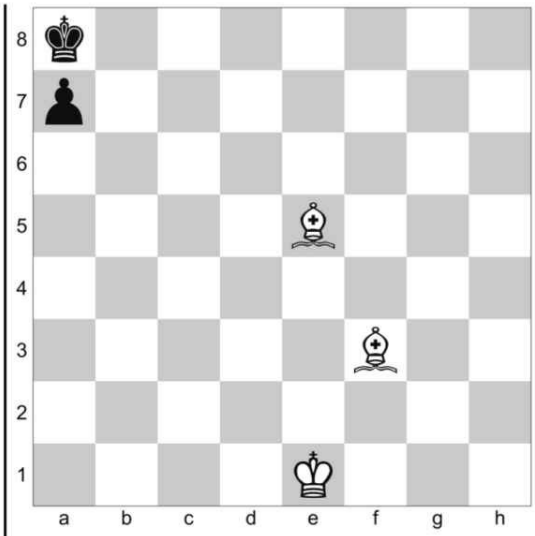


Diagram 132:
Example of double bishop mate

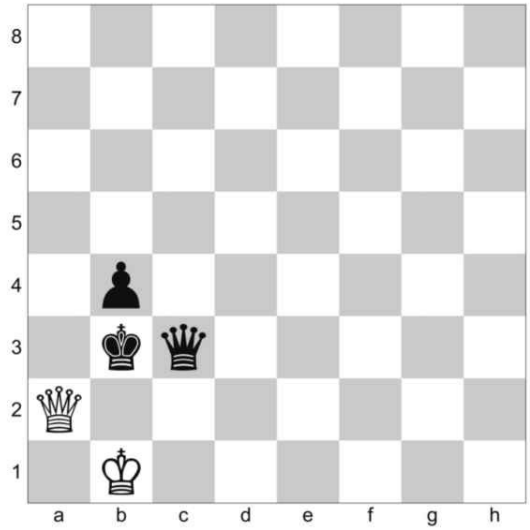


Diagram 133:
Example of dovetail mate

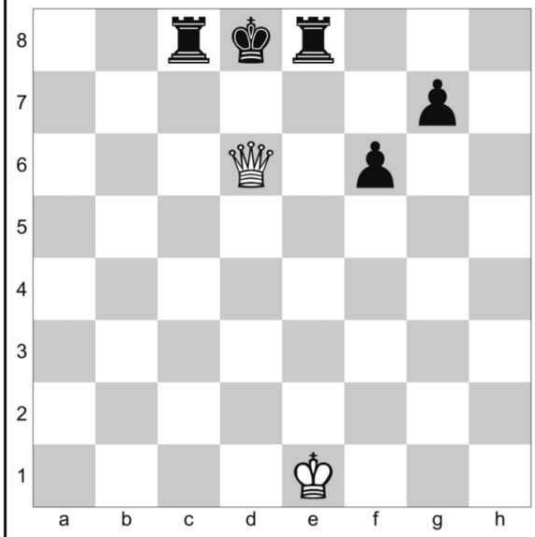


Diagram 134:
Example of epaulette mate

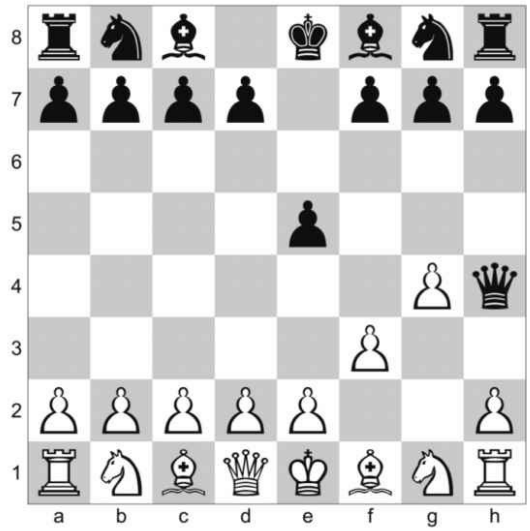


Diagram 135:
Example of
Fool's mate

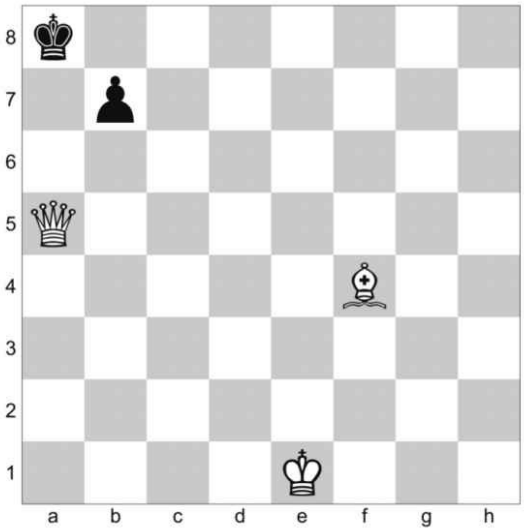


Diagram 136:
Example of
Greco's mate

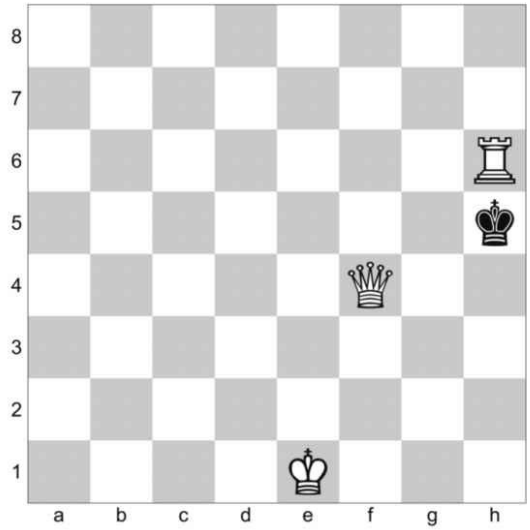


Diagram 137:
Example of
kill box mate

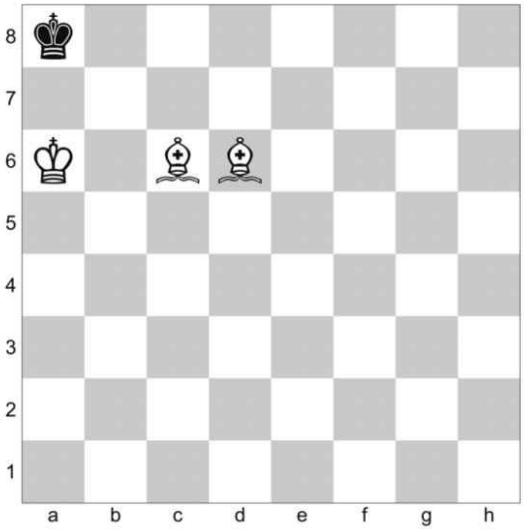


Diagram 138:
Example of
king and two bishops mate

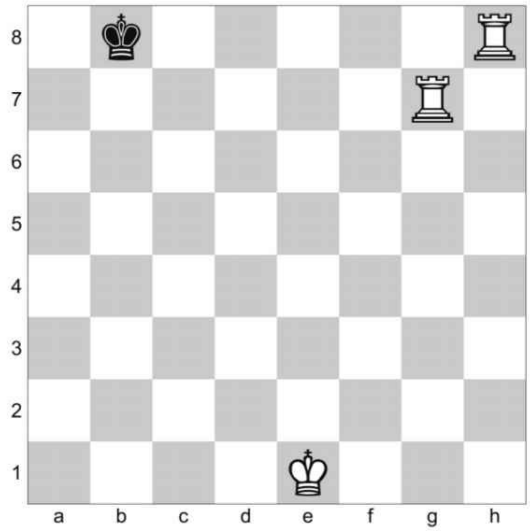


Diagram 139:
Example of
ladder mate

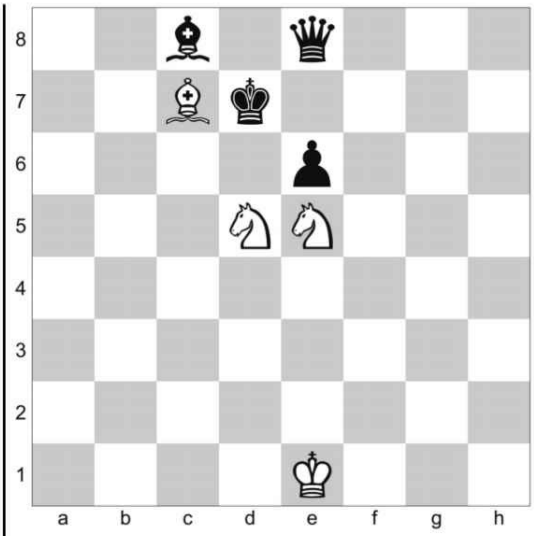


Diagram 140:
Example of
Légal mate

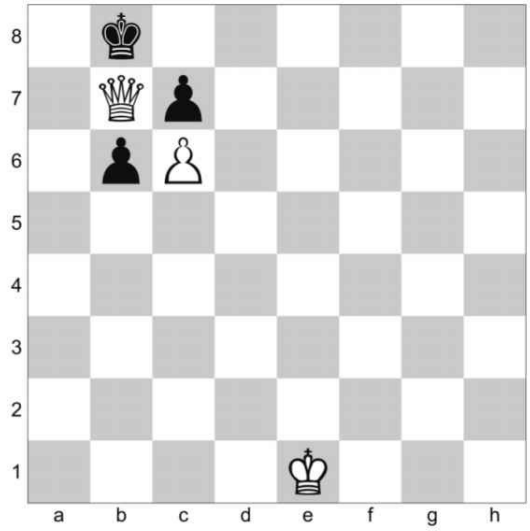


Diagram 141:
Example of
Lolli's mate

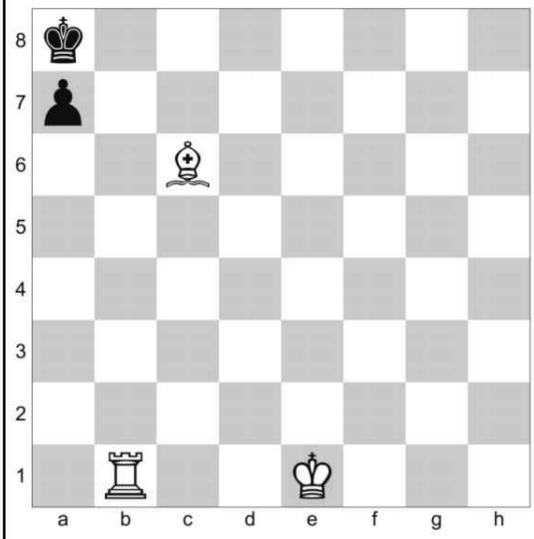


Diagram 142:
Example of
Morphy's mate

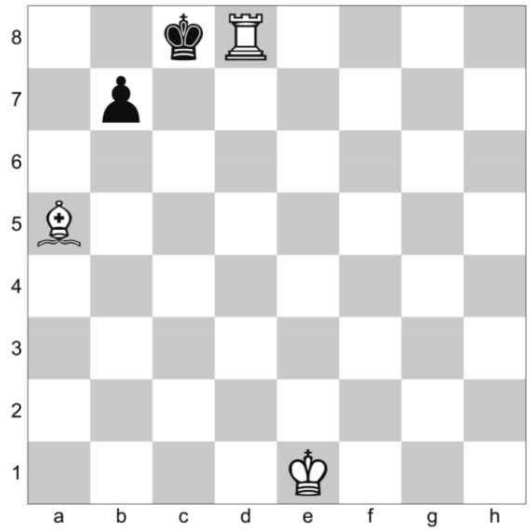


Diagram 143:
Example of opera mate

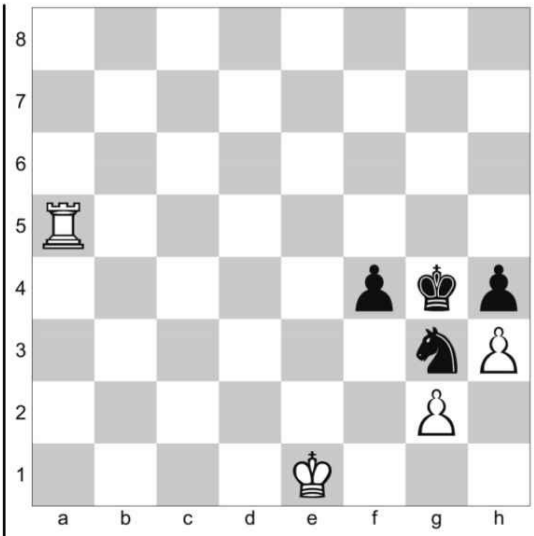


Diagram 144:
Example of pawn mate

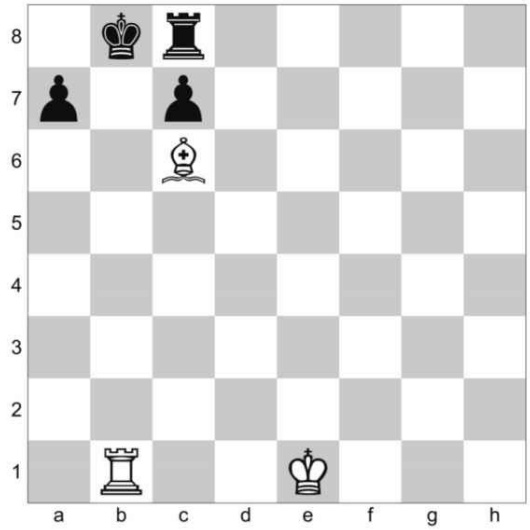


Diagram 145:
Example of Pillsbury's mate

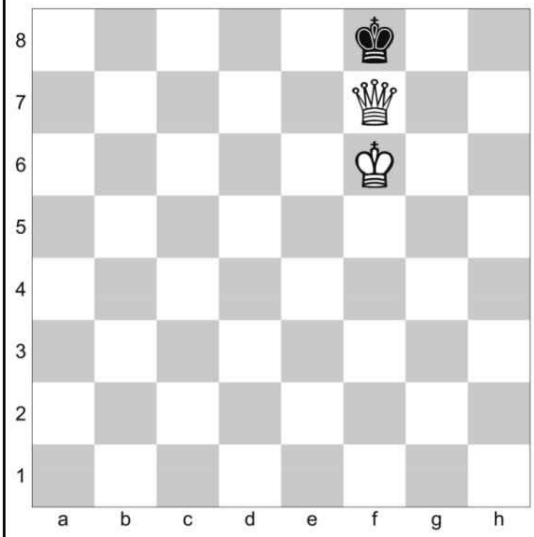


Diagram 146:
Example of queen mate

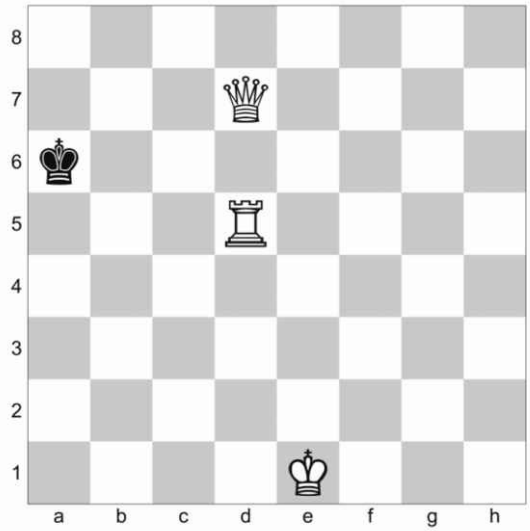


Diagram 147:
Example of railroad Mate

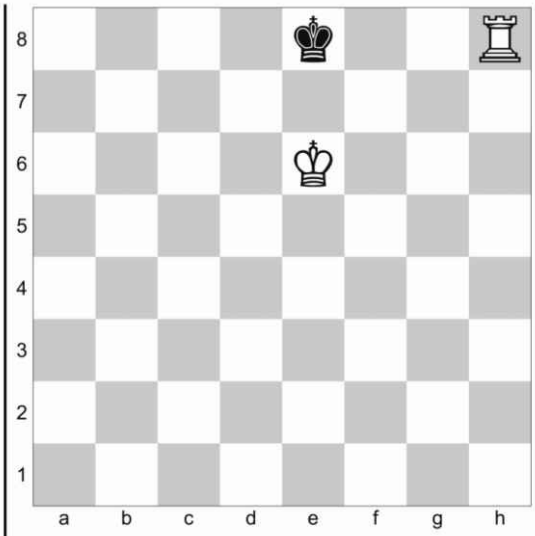


Diagram 148:
Example of rook mate

Diagram 149:
Example of Scholar's mate

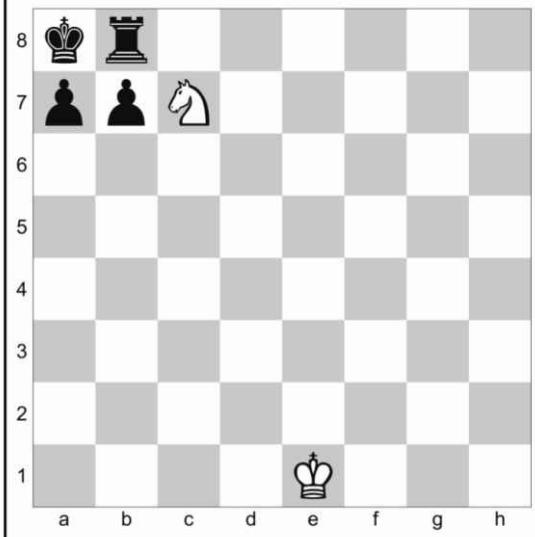


Diagram 150:
Example of smothered mate

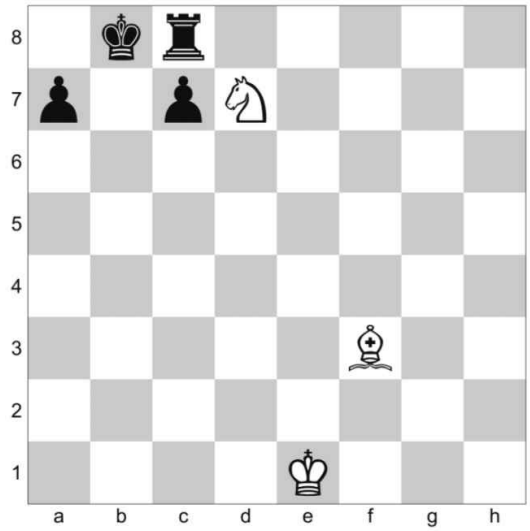


Diagram 151:
Example of suffocation mate

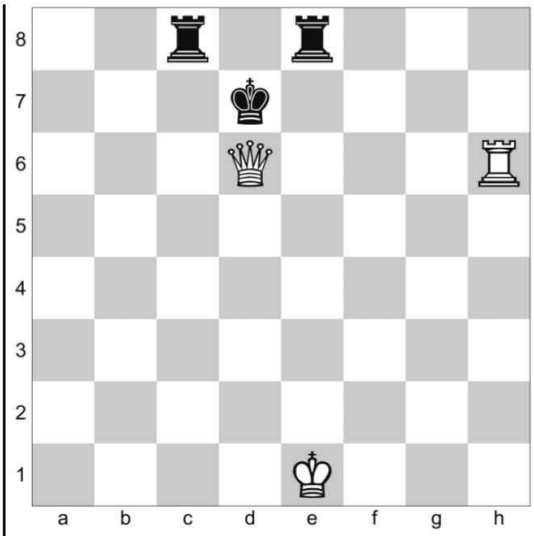
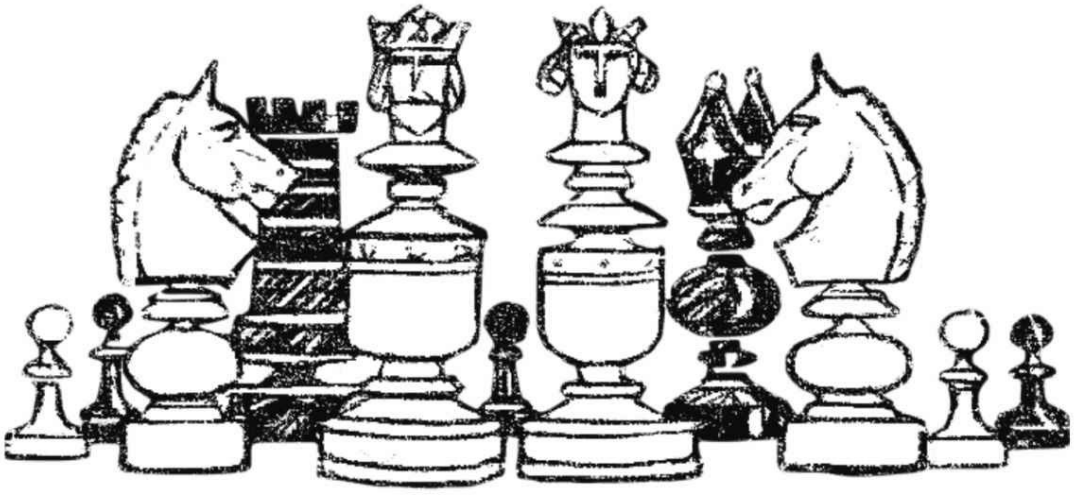


Diagram 152:
Example of swallow's tail mate

PART III

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE GAME



Regulatory Game

It follows the discussion of the main features of the *professional game*, as it is played in official competitions, to have a more precise but not excessively deep idea of everything that concerns the chess world and has a concrete value in enriching the basic knowledge described in this manual.

Government

FIDE is the French acronym for *Fédération Internationale Des Échecs* (*International Chess Federation* or *World Chess Federation* in French), an international organization based in Switzerland that represents the maximum point of reference in the chess world and that, to date, counts 195 associated nations. Its constitution dates back to 07/20/1924 in Paris and in 1999 was officially recognized by the *International Olympic Committee* (IOC). The main official tasks carried out by FIDE are:

- The organization of the *Candidates Tournament*, *World Chess Championship*, *World Team Championship*, and *Chess Olympiad*;
- The definition and updating of the *rules of chess*;
- The calculation and management of the players' *Elo rating*;
- The assignment of the various *chess titles*.

Directly below, in order of importance, are therefore the national chess organizations that instead represent the governing body of the individual state, such as the *United States Chess Federation* (USCF/US Chess) in the United States.

Regulation

In competitions, everyone must respect the guidelines of the *FIDE Handbook*, which describes the *rules* or *laws of chess* and identifies everything in the game that can be made (legal) or is prohibited (illegal). The latest update of this regulation was approved during the 88th FIDE Congress held in Antalya (Turkey) in October 2017 and came into force in January 2018. The organizers of a specific competition, discretionally, can vary some rules (such as the time control, management of the draw offer, or delay of a player), as long as they do not contrast with the FIDE general dispositions.

Moderation

An *arbiter* monitors official matches, and his duties are specified in the international regulation. He has to enforce the rules, maintain the best playing conditions, and sanction any misconduct, such as by admonition, reduction of the reflection time, assigning the victory to the opponent, or expulsion. He must never intervene in the game if not provided by the rules, avoiding, for example, communicating to the players the execution of the move or the forgetfulness to activate the chess clock.

Touch-Move Rule

The general rule, called the *touch-move* or *touched piece rule*, that specifies how the moves must be performed, is described below.

- The moves and captures must be performed with one hand only. This is valid both in the case of castling, where the player must first move the king and then the rook, and in the case of promoting a pawn, where, after having moved the piece in the last rank, he must remove it from the chessboard replacing it with the promoted one.
- When a player touches one or more of his pieces, he must move the first one among those that have available a legal move.
- When a player touches one or more opponent's pieces, he must capture the first one among those that can be eliminated with a legal move.
- When a player touches his king and one of the rooks, if legal, he must castling.
- When a player cannot legally move the touched pieces, he can make a different move.
- A move ends only after leaving the piece on the destination square and after removing the captured piece from the chessboard. Similarly, the castling is completed only after placing the rook.
- When a player touches a piece, he loses the right to claim the opponent’s violation of the rules described above.
- A player can adjust his pieces in their respective squares only after announcing it verbally, using the expression *adjust* or *j’adoube* (in French).

Clock

Normally, the game is played with *time control*, using a double clock with two buttons on top, called *chess* or *game clock* (*image 8*), which is

operated in turn by the players once moved (clock move). The purpose is to count the total time spent by each player and make sure that the game proceeds without delays. In this context, the scarcity of available time to complete the remaining moves (usually less than five minutes) is defined as *zeitnot* (*time crisis* in German).

In its mechanical version (*image 8*), this device has a hand, called *flag*, which rises at the expiration of the last five minutes per turn left and falls once they are ended. Over the years, the analog clock has been gradually replaced by the digital one because it is capable of automatically perform a variety of operations, such as storing the number of moves, varying the cadence of the game, and add a certain amount of time to each player for each move (increment).

The regulation mainly provides that:

- The clock is operated with the same hand used to move;
- The game starts once White's clock is activated;
- If a player does not show up, the game is won by the opponent;
- If a player is late and the organization allows it, the delay is charged to White (since 2009 FIDE does not tolerate delays anymore, while previously the delay could be one hour at most);
- A player loses the game if he runs out of time.

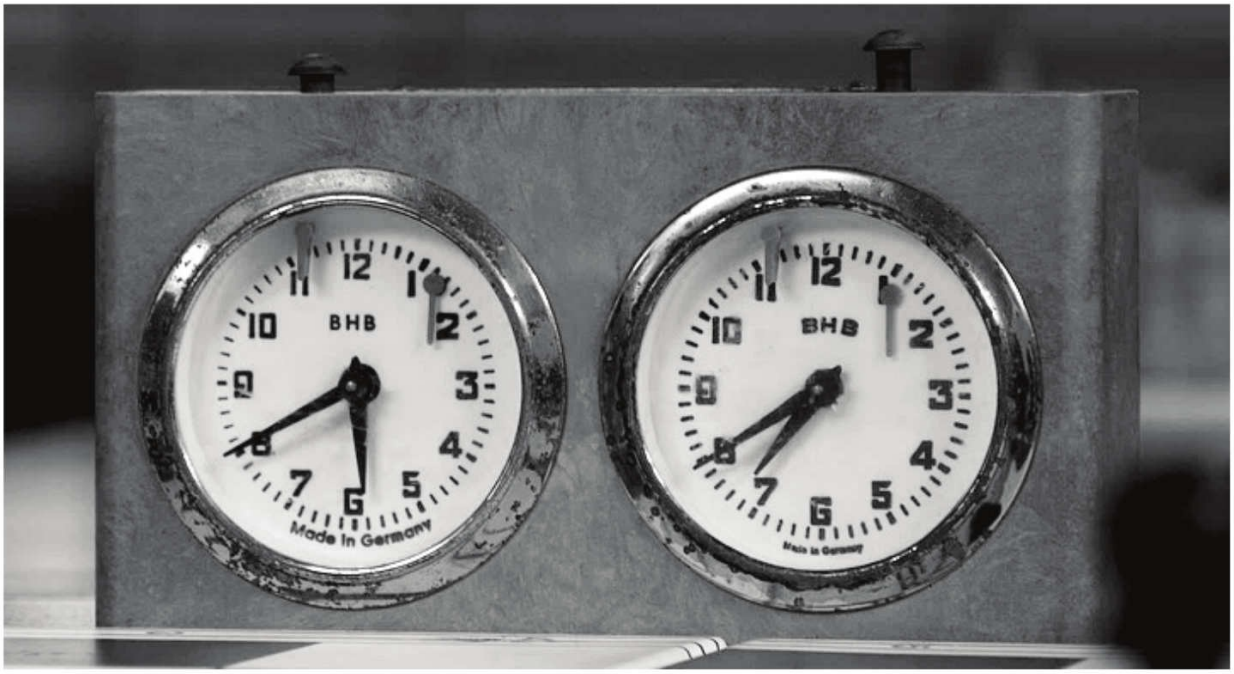


Image 8:
Example of chess clock
(mechanical version)

Time

The *time available* to the players is variable; in fact, it can increase after a certain number of moves or even after each move. In competitions, the arbiter can, at his discretion, both compensate for time losses and punish misconduct related to the improper addition or subtraction of time by players to obtain an unfair advantage.

According to the time control, FIDE identifies two main types of games: *classical time control* and *fast chess time control* (rapid, blitz, and bullet). The main characteristics of the categories just mentioned are:

- *Long game* (standard or classic), which has a reflection time of 60 minutes or more per player;
- *Rapid*, which has a reflection time of between 10 and 60 minutes per player;
- *Blitz*, which has a reflection time of 10 minutes or less per player;
- *Bullet*, which has a reflection time of fewer than 3 minutes per player.

In official competitions, players typically use a standard time control of 90 minutes each for the first 40 moves with the addition of 30 minutes after the 40th move and an increase of 30 seconds per move, bringing the total duration of a game to about 6 hours. The rapid and blitz games differ from the long game for some special rules, but they are all officially recognized by FIDE, and it is possible to earn Elo points (evaluation system of the players' ability) for each of these three modes. The most prestigious competition remains the *World Chess Championship* played with classical time control.

Recording

In competitions, both players must record all the moves (*game score* or *score*) on an official document, called *score sheet* (example in the last part of the manual), during the game, to resolve any disputes. The system currently used for recording moves is the algebraic notation that represents the standard recognized by FIDE.

The regulation mainly provides that:

- The players cannot write the moves in advance;
- The score sheet is used only for recording information related to the game;
- A player may respond to an opponent’s move before transcribing it;
- The score sheet remains visible to the arbiter all the time;
- In particular cases, for lack of time, the players can avoid recording moves;
- In case one or both players have not recorded the moves, the arbiter intervenes so that the score sheets are updated;
- In case it is not possible to update the score sheets, the game is reconstructed on a secondary chessboard, under the control of the arbiter.

Suspension

The *adjournment* represents the suspension and subsequent resumption of the game from the same position and at a later time (typically the next day).

The player whose turn it is to move writes down the move on his score sheet without communicating it. The players’ score sheets are both closed in a sealed envelope, delivered to the arbiter, and opened only at the subsequent resumption of the game so that neither challenger can take advantage in the

analysis. When the game resumes, the arbiter performs the *sealed move*, and the turn passes back to the opponent.

This practice was very common in the past, but it has fallen into disuse with technology development.

Irregularities

The *irregularities* have always accompanied the game of chess. From the end of the 20th century onwards, with technological development, the main problem has become the illegal use of electronic means. In general, irregular behaviors (cheating) are often exhibited to gain an advantage, and these can occur in different ways and at different times. The most common ones are receiving suggestions, being helped by a computer, changing the Elo score, violating the touch-move rule, agreeing on the game result, or annoying the opponent. Also, certain actions that may favor one player at the expense of the other are not explicitly prohibited by the rules, so it is up to the arbiter to judge them.

Irregularities should not be confused with *swindle* situations, in which a player at a disadvantage attempt a comeback by leveraging the confidence of the challenger to try to make him fall into some *traps* (move that can induce the opponent to perform a losing one).

Elo System

The players' strength is calculated through the victories, defeats, and draws achieved, thus defining an objective and comparable playing statistic (ranking). Generally, statistics are based on the *Elo rating system*, named after the famous chess player *Arpad Emrick Elo* (Egyházaskesző 08/25/1903–Brookfield 11/05/1992), which provides, through a mathematical procedure, to update the evaluation of a player taking into account both the result of each game and the strength of each opponent. The formulas used to define the score have been improved in time and officially adopted by FIDE since 1970. FIDE and the various national federations regularly update rankings with the rating of all players who have obtained an Elo score.

Awards

The *chess titles* are official awards assigned at the international level by FIDE to chess players of high level and good performance (norms) in specific

tournaments. These titles last for life, cannot be withdrawn, and are granted to male and female players. There are also awards reserved for the correspondence chess and the solution or composition of chess problems. The most prestigious title is that of *world champion*, followed by that of *Grandmaster* (GM). The local federations manage instead the national titles.

For information purposes, the most important FIDE titles with the related Elo score are listed below:

- *2500 points*, title of *Grandmaster* (GM);
- *2400 points*, title of *International Master* (IM);
- *2300 points*, title of *FIDE Master* (FM);
- *2200 points*, title of *Candidate Master* (CM).

Different Modalities

In addition to the classic and best-known one, the game of chess can be practiced in several other modalities, and the main ones are described below.

- *Simultaneous chess* (*exhibition* or *display*), in which a player competes with a variable number of challengers simultaneously, passing from one chessboard to another at each move.
- *Blindfold chess*, in which the players, even simultaneously, compete, relying totally on their memory.
- *Correspondence chess*, in which the players compete in different sessions and also very long timing (up to several years) through postal service, mail, or dedicated servers, depending on the transmission method and regulation of reference. It is also possible to use external aids such as books, databases, or chess software when provided. This type of game is managed and regulated by the *International Correspondence Chess Federation* (ICCF), recognized by FIDE, which also organizes the individual and team world championships.
- *Advanced chess*, in which players compete with the help of a computer or any other consultation for position analysis.
- *Fast chess*, in which the players compete with very short timing and different rules compared to classic chess. The main game modalities are *rapid*, *blitz*, and *bullet*. The first two are recognized by FIDE, while the last one instead is not, and this is mainly practiced online.
- *Online chess*, in which players compete in real-time using computers or mobile devices, relying on dedicated servers. In many of these platforms, it is also applied the Elo rating system similar to the official one provided by FIDE.

Puzzles

In chess, *composition* (chess puzzle) is the art of creating particular positions from which the player must reach a particular objective. In this context, whoever is dedicated to writing compositions is called *composer*.

There are mainly two types of compositions:

- *Studies*, i.e., compositions in which is presented the position of an endgame to be solved, generally indicating the player whose turn it is to move and the conclusion to be obtained but not the number of moves needed to get there;
- *Problems*, i.e., more free compositions that often provide artificial positions difficult to obtain in a real game, in which the *solver* must reach a certain objective.

The composition of problems and chess studies is regulated by the World Federation for Chess Composition (WFCC), which also manages the various international titles.

Heterodox chess

The *chess variants*, also called *heterodox chess*, are games derived from classical chess (*international chess* or *western chess*) that have received a certain number of changes. The changes may include differences in starting position, objectives, rules, pieces (fairy pieces), chessboards, or a combination of these characteristics.

Some examples of the many variants existing are:

- *Atomic* and *Avalanche Chess* which have different rules;
- *Bughouse* and *Crazyhouse*, which have a different number of players;
- *Chess960* (*diagram 153*) and *Transcendental chess* (*diagram 154*), which have a different disposition of the pieces;
- *Dunsany's chess* (*diagram 155*) and *Horde* (*diagram 156*), which have a different number of pieces;
- *Almost chess* and *Capablanca chess*, which have unusual pieces;
- Alice chess and Hexagonal chess, which have a chessboard of different shape.

There are thousands of variants also very different between them, and this shows once again how much the chess world is vast and complex.

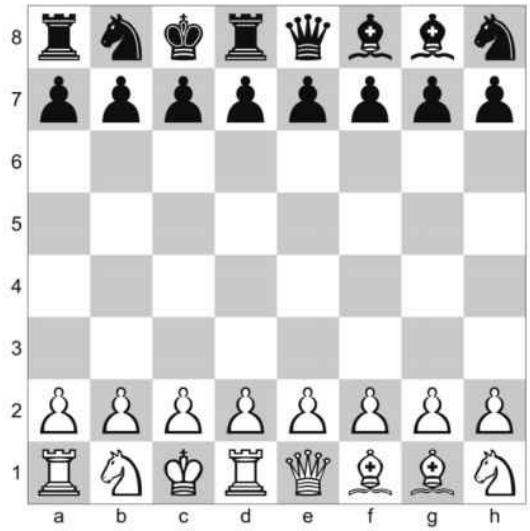


Diagram 153:
Example of
Chess960
(one of the 960 possible
starting positions)

Diagram 154:
Example of
Transcendental chess
(one of the possible
starting positions)

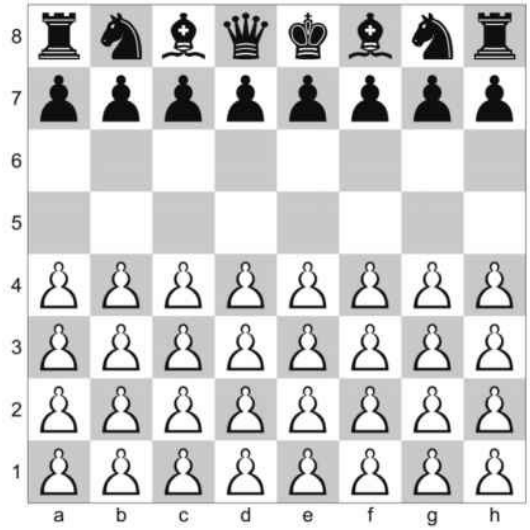


Diagram 155:
Example of
Dunsany's chess
(starting position)

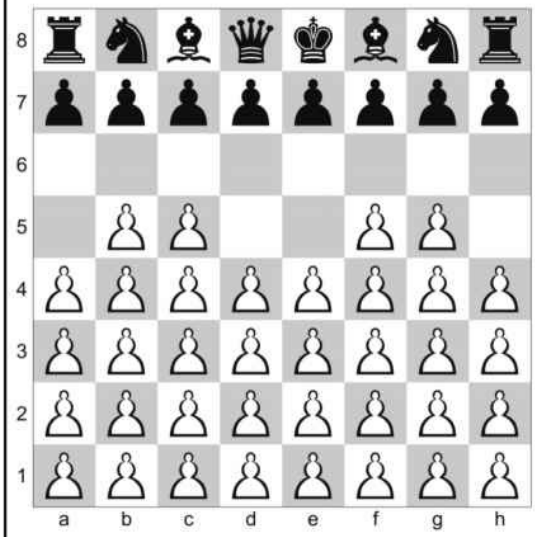


Diagram 156:
Example of
Horde chess
(starting position)

History and Other Curiosities

It follows the discussion of the most interesting and curious themes related to the long and fascinating *history* of chess that has lasted more than 1500 years.

Origins and Evolution

A complete chess player should know every aspect of the game, including its *history*, and for this reason, the evolutionary milestones that it has undergone in the course of the centuries are reported below, from the uncertain origins to arrive finally to this date, in its modern version:

- In the 6th century, it is born the ancestor of the game of chess (some sources trace it back to the *chaturanga* in India, others to the *xiangqi* in China);
- After the 8th−9th century, from the Indo-Persian area, it affirms itself in the Arab civilization, changing in theory;
- From the 9th century, it spreads towards Russia and progressively throughout Europe;
- At the end of the 15th century, modern rules are established in Italy and Spain;
- Between the 16th and 17th century, it knows an evolution in theory with numerous treatises and also arrives in America;
- In the 18th century, it prosper in the cafes of the great European cities;
- In the 19th century, clubs flourish and specialized publications increase;
- From the middle of the 19th century, the strategic foundations are codified and in the same period, the first modern tournaments take place;
- The XX century sees a further evolution of the theory and the establishment of the *International Chess Federation* (FIDE), also in 1997, a computer defeats for the first time a world champion (New York, 05/11/1997, IBM Deep Blue *vs.* Garry Kimovich Kasparov);
- From the beginning of the 21st century until today, technology becomes essential in developing the game and preparation of professionals, leading to its affirmation online.

Chess is still one of the most loved, known, and practiced games in the

world.

Modern Era

Going into the specifics of the evolution of the *online game*, the key steps to mention are:

- In 1992, it is born the first server dedicated to chess;
- In the following years, the spread of broadband increases the importance of the online game among competitive chess;
- In 2014, FIDE creates its official portal, called *FIDE Online Arena*;
- In 2020, the pandemic forces chess federations to award national championships online;
- In August 2020, FIDE organizes the first online chess Olympics;
- In May 2020, the champion *Magnus Carlsen* (Tønsberg, 11/30/1990) makes a decisive contribution to the entry of professionalism into online chess by organizing a tournament by invitation on *Chess24*;
- In 2021, FIDE approves the rules for online competitions.

Technology

As explained above, modern history has seen an increasing development of technology applied to chess. The central elements of this process have been the *chess software* and *internet chess servers*.

The *chess software* is computer programs constituted by an algorithm of search and evaluation, called *engine*, able to play chess. Over time, their strength has increased, reaching skills equal to or greater than a Grandmaster's, and specific Elo rankings have been introduced to evaluate their rating. These have a graphical interface through which one can interact and they are able to access the databases of openings or endgames.

Internet Chess Servers (ICS) are high-performance computers that provide a service to other networked computers to emulate all aspects of a game by connecting to a dedicated website. The strength of players competing in this modality is measured by a scoring system similar to the classic Elo. In addition, some of these servers or sites also provide chess engines to perform the analysis of the games.

Tournaments

A *chess tournament* is a competition that, through a series of games (matches), determines the victory of a player or a team. In this context, everyone must follow the FIDE guidelines, and the selection systems used are the following:

- *Round-robin style*, in which each participant challenges, in turn, all other competitors (similar to the *Scheveningen system* used for confrontation between teams);
- *Swiss system style*, in which the competitors with a similar score are paired;
- *Single-elimination style* or *knock-out style*, in which the competitor is directly eliminated from the competition following a defeat.

The first international chess tournament was organized in London in 1851. Today, the most important tournament for individual game is the *Tata Steel chess tournament*, while for teams, is the *Chess Olympiad*.

Major Competitions

As already mentioned, competitions are an integral part of the game history; those now most important and recognized worldwide are the *World Chess Championship* and *Chess Olympiad*.

The *World Chess Championship* is a competition that determines the winner of the title of *world chess champion* and is held every two years. The competition is open to both men and women, and the *Women's World Chess Championship* is reserved for the latter. There are also specific *championships* for *junior*, *senior*, *rapid*, *blitz*, and *computer* categories. The first world championship dates back to 1886 with the victory of *Wilhelm Steinitz* (Prague, 05/18/1836–New York, 08/12/1900). Until 1946, the championship is organized privately and without qualifications, with the defending champion choosing whether or not to accept the various challenges. The modalities change after World War II when FIDE establishes a system in which the defending champion was challenged by a player selected through a qualification system. This kind of organization lasts until 1993, when the champion *Garry Kasparov* (Baku, 04/13/1963) and his challenger *Nigel Short* (Leigh, 06/01/1965) separate from FIDE. The split continues until 2006, with the reunification match between *Vladimir Kramnik*

(Tuapse, 06/25/1975) and *Veselin Topalov* (Ruse, 03/15/1975). Since 2013, the world champion is *Magnus Carlsen* (Tønsberg, 11/30/1990).

The *Chess Olympiad* is a tournament for national teams held every two years. The first Chess Olympiad dates back to 1924, during the Paris *Olympic Games*, but it is not considered an official edition because not organized by FIDE. Before World War II, the event was occasionally disputed every year, whereas, since 1950, it is regularly held every two years. In 1957, the first women's Olympiad took place, and since 1972, it has been combined with the men's competition with the same biennial cadence.

Best of All Time

The challenges and matches that have followed over time have decreed the rise and succession of *great chess champions*, still remembered and studied. To define which of these are the best of all time is a difficult task because the opinions are discordant and not very objective, in addition to the fact that some chess players belong to completely different epochs and that the evaluation systems have undergone constant evolution. For this reason, it is reported below a list in alphabetical order (including date and place of birth and eventually death as well as the nation represented in the period of activity) of the most important and known chess players in the world as a general indication.

- *Alexander Alekhine*
(Moscow, 10/31/1892–Lisbon, 03/24/1946), Russia.
- *Anand Viswanathan*
(Chennai, 12/11/1969), India.
- *Anatoly Karpov*
(Zlatoust, 05/23/1951), Russia.
- *Emanuel Lasker*
(Berlinek, 12/24/1868–New York, 01/11/1941), Germ
- *Garry Kimovich* Kasparov
(Baku, 04/13/1963), Russia.
- *Jose Raul Capablanca*
(Havana, 11/19/1888–New York, 03/08/1942), Cuba.
- *Magnus Carlsen*

(Tønsberg, 11/30/1990), Norway.
- *Mikhail Botvinnik*

(Kuokkala, 08/17/1911 – Moscow, 05/05/1995), Russia
- *Mikhail Tal*

(Riga, 11/09/1936 – Moscow, 06/28/1992), Russia.
- *Paul Morphy*

(New Orleans, 06/22/1837 – 07/10/1884), USA.
- *Robert James Fischer*

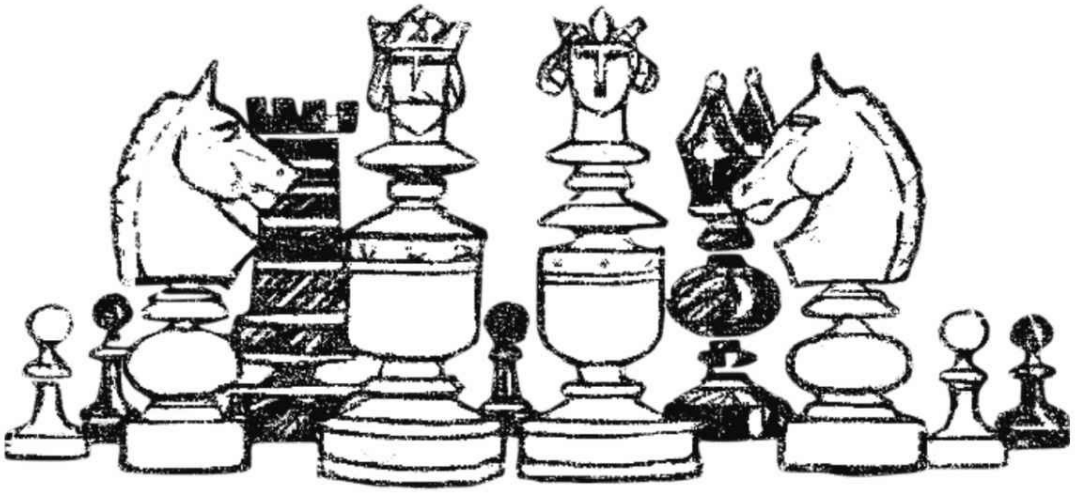
(Chicago, 03/09/1943 – Reykjavík, 01/17/2008), USA
- *Vladimir Borisovič Kramnik*

(Tuapse, 06/25/1975), Russia.
- *Wilhelm Steinitz*

(Prague, 05/18/1836 – New York, 08/12/1900), Austri

PART IV

DEEPENING OF THE GAME



Think Like a Champion

Psychology and *chess* are two sides of the same coin. The role of psychology relating to the game is often underestimated, even if its indisputable importance has been demonstrated since the first studies carried out during the International Tournament of Moscow in 1925. It follows that to obtain victory, the technical component alone is not enough.

The key elements to work on to improve are many, and the main ones, which inevitably affect logical processes in the game, are deepened below.

- *Attention and concentration*: the first one represents the capability to concentrate thought in constantly changing situations, while the second represents the protraction of attention over time. In fact, the game requires the player to continuously analyze the redistribution of the pieces and the new combinations that are formed, imposing to visualize their implications. Attention and concentration are active and mobile processes that must, therefore, be refined.
- *Will, emotionality, and self-knowledge*: the first represents the ability to tend decisively and with full autonomy to realize a particular goal, while the second is a strong and sudden turmoil of psychic balance. All the elements just described converging in the self-knowledge that represents the capability to normalize an altered psychological state (negative emotional situation) and not effective, through an act of will, taking distance from the competition.
- *Relationship with the opponent*: represents the act of identification with the challenger to understand his game (strengths, weaknesses, and schemes) and obtain an advantage.
- *Time factor*: represents living with its constant scarcity in the game and the need to remain lucid without being influenced.
- *Error*: represents the awareness that in the game, errors are inevitable. Therefore, since it is impossible to reach perfection, it becomes essential to learn to look at them critically, tracing their characteristics, cataloguing them, and trying to limit their number.
- *Image*: represents both the visual perception and mental image at the same time. This allows one to evaluate and subsequently determine the various moves that can be played according to the existing relationships between pieces on the chessboard at a given time.
- *Intuition and instinctivity:* the first one represents the rapid

understanding and evaluation of the situation on the chessboard, i.e., the solution that immediately comes to mind; while the second one represents the internal push to act that independently from reason, rationality and intelligence, determines a behavior and the consequent reactions. The latter manifests in the game with the *instinctive move*, the most common incorrect attitude among weak players.

- *Playing style*: represents the way a person plays, taking into account that in this is manifested all his personality. Generally, it is possible to distinguish two categories; the *combinative players* who have a sharp and tactical approach expressed with sacrifices and combinations, and the *positional players* who have a calm and solid approach expressed with strategy and logic. So the true champion is the one who manages to harmonize the combination game with the positional one.

In light of what has been said so far, it is clear that one must work on one's psychology, and this translates practically into dominating oneself and the opponent. The ultimate goal is to maintain high pressure on the challenger to set one's own game and *demolish* his mind, one move at a time until reaching the victory.

Analyze To Win

In chess, the *analysis* identifies a cognitive method that provides the deconstruction of a *game* (regardless of the result) in its fundamental parts (up to the single move) to identify and study its details, reasoning with a cool head and excluding the emotional component. The process defines the quality of the game set, allowing one to understand exactly why decisions were made that led to its development and conclusion in a certain way and whether or not these were the best possible. Since behind every move there are many possibilities, this *modus operandi* also allows to test others not executed in the game. Generally, the most interesting matches to analyze are one's own, but it is always worth deepening those of the other players and Grandmasters.

The two methods usually used to analyze the game are *move by move* (classic system) and a *questionnaire* (series of questions highlighting the aspects to be checked without leaving anything to chance). To get the most out of all these verification techniques (in addition to do it oneself), one can take advantage of the help of another stronger player, directly compare oneself with the opponent (*post mortem* analysis), and create a history of all games. The next step is represented by the support of the computer, using a chess engine, to go into detail of the various phases of the game, working on possible variants.

Ultimately, taking home at least one lesson from each game allows one to go far and grow constantly.

Deal With Defeat

Knowing how to analyze effectively is of fundamental importance, especially in the case of a *defeat*. As already widely emphasized, this is part of the game, and when it happens, it is essential not to be discouraged (especially at the beginning), considering it as an excellent opportunity to improve. One must never rest one's self-esteem on the result, otherwise, one will never be able to analyze it in an objective and detached way. Compared to the more general analysis described above, the one related to defeat focuses on identifying and eliminating all the inefficiencies connected to one's way of playing, starting from the most obvious to get to the most hidden. All in a controlled emotional state and always first from the psychological and then technical point of view, because a wrong

psychological evaluation leads to an approximate and ineffective technical one. As always, all questions one must ask oneself respond to the need to understand whether or not there is a psychological motivation behind the mistakes made and, if yes, remedy them. Once this is done, one passes to the last phase, that of the technical analysis, in which one can make use of all the aids already mentioned (strongest players, best around software, etc.), but shifting the focus on the search for weaknesses and, once found, memorize them to ensure that they do not compromise future games. Also completed the analysis process, it will be therefore possible to face following clashes with a greater awareness and level of preparation, keeping in mind that experience and skills are forged through mistakes.

Practice

In the game of chess, to put into practice the acquired knowledge through *constant exercise* becomes essential to gain a sensitive and exponential increase of one's abilities. For this purpose, the last part of the manual is dedicated to score sheets, accompanied by a series of useful diagrams to be able, if necessary, to annotate the characteristics of the most interesting or complex positions and deepen their study at a later time.

As already explained above, a *chess score sheet* is a standardized sheet in which to transcribe, usually using the algebraic notation and relative comment symbology, the moves and score of the games, while a *chess diagram* is the graphic representation of a determined position on the chessboard through the use of a standard dedicated symbology.

The model here used, derived from those official and more common ones, has been simplified at best and is composed essentially of three parts:

- The upper part, to annotate the date, place, and generalities of the two players;
- The central part, to record the moves executed by both players, up to a maximum of 60 (statistically a sufficient number to end a game);
- The lower part to indicate the result.

Regarding instead the diagrams, there are four stylized chessboards included after each score sheet to complete, if necessary, in the following way:

- By drawing the position of the pieces on the graph;
- By assigning a name to the graph;
- By adding any notes.

To show the correct use of the models, in the first score sheet has been transcribed and commented the famous *Evergreen Game*, while in the following three have been reported the other spectacular games (*Immortal Game*, *Peruvian Immortal* and *The Game of the Century*) mentioned in the chapter concerning the tactics and that must be surely studied.

Score Sheet: *Evergreen Game*					
Place: *unknown*			Date: *1852*		
White: *Adolf Anderssen*			Black: *Jean Dufresne*		
	White	**Black**		**White**	**Black**
1	*e4*	*e5*	31		
2	*Nf3*	*Nc6*	32		
3	*Bc4*	*Bc5*	33		
4	*b4*	*Bxb4*	34		
5	*c3*	*Ba5*	35		
6	*d4*	*exd4*	36		
7	*o-o*	*d3*	37		
8	*Qb3*	*Qf6*	38		
9	*e5*	*Qg6*	39		
10	*Re1!*	*Nge7*	**40**		
11	*Ba3*	*b5?!*	41		
12	*Qxb5*	*Rb8*	42		
13	*Qa4*	*Bb6*	43		
14	*Nbd2*	*Bb7?*	44		
15	*Ne4*	*Qf5?*	45		
16	*Bxd3*	*Qh5*	46		
17	*Nf6+!?*	*gxf6*	47		
18	*exf6*	*Rg8*	48		
19	*Rad1!*	*Qxf3*	49		
20	*Rxe7+!*	*Nxe7?*	**50**		
21	*Qxd7+!!*	*Kxd7*	51		
22	*Bf5+*	*Ke8*	52		
23	*Bd7+*	*Kf8*	53		
24	*Bxe7#*		54		
25			55		
26			56		
27			57		
28			58		
29			59		
30			**60**		
Result:	☒ White Won		☐ Black Won		☐ Draw

Diagram:
position after 7...d3
Notes:
Black tries to stop White's rapid development.

Diagram:
position after 10. Re1!
Notes:
Black offers a sacrifice to activate the rook on a8, gaining a tempo.

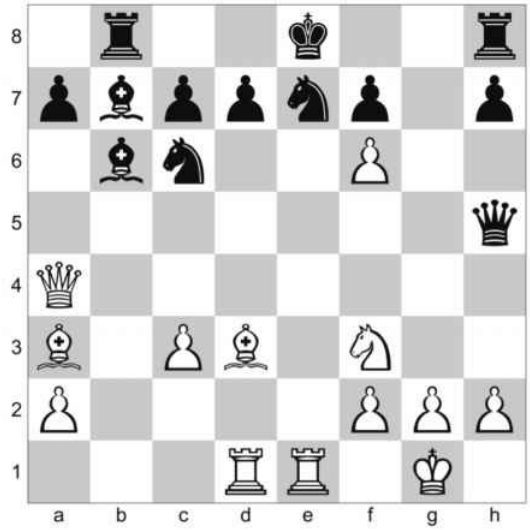


Diagram:
position after 19. Rad1!
Notes:
White sets a trap in which Black falls.

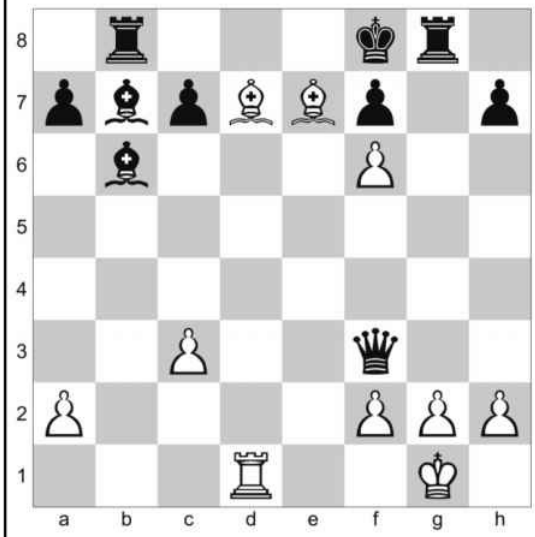


Diagram:
Final position after 24. Bxe7#
Notes:
White checkmates (1-0).

Score Sheet: *Immortal Game*					
Place: *London*			Date: *06/21/1851*		
White: *Adolf Anderssen*			Black: *Lionel Kieseritzky*		
	White	**Black**		**White**	**Black**
1	*e4*	*e5*	31		
2	*f4*	*exf4*	32		
3	*Bc4*	*Qh4+*	33		
4	*Kf1*	*b5?!*	34		
5	*Bxb5*	*Nf6*	35		
6	*Nf3*	*Qh6*	36		
7	*d3*	*Nh5*	37		
8	*Nh4*	*Qg5*	38		
9	*Nf5*	*c6*	39		
10	*g4?*	*Nf6*	**40**		
11	*Rg1!*	*cxb5?*	41		
12	*h4!*	*Qg6*	42		
13	*h5*	*Qg5*	43		
14	*Qf3*	*Ng8*	44		
15	*Bxf4*	*Qf6*	45		
16	*Nc3*	*Bc5*	46		
17	*Nd5*	*Qxb2*	47		
18	*Bd6!*	*Bxg1?*	48		
19	*e5!*	*Qxa1+*	49		
20	*Ke2*	*Na6*	**50**		
21	*Nxg7+*	*Kd8*	51		
22	*Qf6+!*	*Nxf6*	52		
23	*Be7#*		53		
24			54		
25			55		
26			56		
27			57		
28			58		
29			59		
30			**60**		
Result:	☒ White Won	☐ Black Won	☐ Draw		

Score Sheet: *Peruvian Immortal*					
Place: *Budapest*			Date: *1934*		
White: *Esteban Canal*			Black: *unknown*		
	White	**Black**		**White**	**Black**
1	*e4*	*d5*	31		
2	*exd5*	*Qxd5*	32		
3	*Nc3*	*Qa5*	33		
4	*d4*	*c6*	34		
5	*Nf3*	*Bg4*	35		
6	*Bf4*	*e6*	36		
7	*h3*	*Bxf3*	37		
8	*Qxf3*	*Bb4*	38		
9	*Be2*	*Nd7*	39		
10	*a3*	*0-0-0??*	**40**		
11	*axb4!!*	*Qxa1+*	41		
12	*Kd2!*	*Qxh1*	42		
13	*Qxc6+!*	*bxc6*	43		
14	*Ba6#*		44		
15			45		
16			46		
17			47		
18			48		
19			49		
20			**50**		
21			51		
22			52		
23			53		
24			54		
25			55		
26			56		
27			57		
28			58		
29			59		
30			**60**		
Result:	☒ White Won	☐ Black Won		☐ Draw	

Score Sheet: *The Game of the Century*					
Place: *New York*			Date: *10/17/1956*		
White: *Donald Byrne*			Black: *Bobby Fischer*		
	White	**Black**		**White**	**Black**
1	*Nf3*	*Nf6*	31	*Nf3*	*Ne4*
2	*c4*	*g6*	32	*Qb8*	*b5*
3	*Nc3*	*Bg7*	33	*h4*	*h5*
4	*d4*	*o-o*	34	*Ne5*	*Kg7*
5	*Bf4*	*d5*	35	*Kg1*	*Bc5+*
6	*Qb3*	*dxc4*	36	*Kf1*	*Ng3+*
7	*Qxc4*	*c6*	37	*Ke1*	*Bb4+*
8	*e4*	*Nbd7*	38	*Kd1*	*Bb3+*
9	*Rd1*	*Nb6*	39	*Kc1*	*Ne2+*
10	*Qc5*	*Bg4*	**40**	*Kb1*	*Nc3+*
11	*Bg5?*	*Na4!!*	41	*Kc1*	*Rc2#*
12	*Qa3*	*Nxc3*	42		
13	*bxc3*	*Nxe4!*	43		
14	*Bxe7*	*Qb6*	44		
15	*Bc4*	*Nxc3!*	45		
16	*Bc5*	*Rfe8+*	46		
17	*Kf1*	*Be6!!*	47		
18	*Bxb6?*	*Bxc4+*	48		
19	*Kg1*	*Ne2+*	49		
20	*Kf1*	*Nxd4+*	**50**		
21	*Kg1*	*Ne2+*	51		
22	*Kf1*	*Nc3+*	52		
23	*Kg1*	*axb6*	53		
24	*Qb4*	*Ra4!*	54		
25	*Qxb6*	*Nxd1*	55		
26	*h3*	*Rxa2*	56		
27	*Kh2*	*Nxf2*	57		
28	*Re1*	*Rxe1*	58		
29	*Qd8+*	*Bf8*	59		
30	*Nxe1*	*Bd5*	**60**		
Result:	☐ White Won		☒ Black Won		☐ Draw

Specific Terminology

Below is a description of the most important and used *chess terms*, listed in alphabetical order.

Active:
A piece effective in terms of both movement possibilities and attacking capability. In other cases, an aggressive style of play.

Adjournment:
Postponing an unfinished game.

Advanced pawn:
A pawn placed in the opponent's half of the chessboard.

Advantage:
A better game position than the opponent offering a chance to achieve victory.

Algebraic notation:
The standard system for transcribing moves using alphanumeric coordinates.

Analysis:
The study of a game or position.

Annotation:
A written commentary on the game using words, specific symbols, or notation.

Artificial castling:
Achieving a final castling position with normal moves and thus in an alternative way to conventional one.

Attack:
The threat to take a piece or threat to an important unoccupied square.

Back/first/home rank:
The line on which pieces are placed behind one's pawns at the beginning of the game (*1st* and *8th* rank).

Backward pawn:
A pawn placed behind all the other friendly pawns present on adjacent files that cannot advance safely.

Bad bishop:
A bishop hindered in his movements by pawns of its color.

Bare/lone king:
When in the endgame, one of the players remains only with the king.
Battery:
The placement of two or more pieces along the same line of action to increase their offensive capacities.
Bishop pair:
Both bishops of a player.
Bishops on opposite colors/opposite-colored bishops:
When a player remains only with the light-square bishop and the opponent with the dark-square bishop.
Black/second player:
The player who uses the black pieces and moves second.
Block:
The interposition of a piece between one of one's own attacked and that of the opponent threatening it.
Blockade:
Placing a piece in front of an opponent's pawn to hinder its advance and limit the movement of other enemy pieces.
Blocked position:
When both players cannot progress due to a particular arrangement of the pawns that cuts the chessboard in two.
Break:
A move that gains space.
Calculate:
The mental planning of the game.
Capture/eat:
Eliminating an opponent's piece from the chessboard.
Castling:
The special move that, under certain conditions, allows the exchange of places between the king and one of the rooks.
Center:
The four squares in the center of the chessboard (*d4*, *e4*, *d5*, *e5*).
Center/central file:
The queen's file (*d*-file) or the king's file (*e*-file).
Centralization:
Moving a piece toward the center of the chessboard so that it has greater effectiveness.

Check:

The direct attack on the opponent's king.

Checkmate/mate:

When a player cannot remove the king from the check and is therefore defeated.

Chess/game clock:

The device used in the game that keeps track of the time spent by each player to perform their moves.

Chess diagram:

A graphical representation of a game position with standardized symbols.

Chess set:

The set of 32 pieces and the chessboard, i.e., 16 white pieces and 16 black pieces (the standard is represented by the *Staunton chess set*).

Clock move:

The completion of a move by stopping the chess clock.

Clock time:

The time consumed or remaining indicated by the chess clock.

Closed file:

A file on which both players have at least one pawn.

Closed game:

A position in which there are few open files or diagonals.

Colorbound:

The property of a piece (usually the bishop) to move only on squares of the same color.

Combination:

A series of moves, even forced, which aim to obtain an advantage.

Compensation:

The improvement of a position after a loss of material.

Connected pawns:

Two or more friendly pawns placed on adjacent files.

Consolidation:

The improvement of a position through the repositioning of one or more pieces.

Control:

The protection of one or more squares by one or more pieces in such a way to prevent the settlement or passage of those opponents.

Control of the center:

The possession of one or more pieces that attack one or more central squares of the chessboard.

Corresponding/relative/sister/coordinate squares:

In endgames, especially those of pawns, are pairs of squares of reciprocal *zugzwang* that force the movements of a king compared to the opponent's one to maintain a certain position.

Counterattack:

Attacking the opponent in response to his offensive action.

Countergambit:

Playing a gambit in response to the opponent’s one.

Counterplay:

An aggressive action of the defender.

Cross-check:

Checking the opponent's king following the parry of another immediately preceding check.

Dark-square bishop:

A bishop moving on the dark or black squares.

Dead position:

The situation in which neither player can legally checkmate the opponent.

Decoying:

Sacrificing one of one’s own pieces to force an opponent's one to move in a disadvantageous position.

Defense (defend):

A move or plan that aims to counter an opponent’s attack.

Deflection:

Causing the movement of an opponent's piece so that it leaves a key defensive point.

Development:

The degree of effectiveness achieved by the pieces following their placement, at a given time of the game.

Diagonal:

An oblique line formed by squares of the same color touching with the vertices.

Discovered attack:

The movement of a piece that clears the line of attack of another

friendly piece to threaten an opponent's one.

Discovered check:

The discovered attack on the opponent's king.

Double attack:

Different pieces that attack one or more opponent's pieces simultaneously.

Double-check:

Two pieces that give check simultaneously.

Doubled pawns:

Two friendly pawns place on the same file.

Doubled/connected rooks:

A rooks pair placed on the same file or rank with no other pieces in the middle.

Draw:

A tie at the end of the game.

Dynamism:

Favoring the activity of the pieces rather than their placement.

ECO:

The acronym for *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*.

Elo rating system:

The standard classification system of a player’s strength.

Endgame/end game/ending:

The final phase of the game.

En passant (*in the act of passing* in French)**:**

The special move of the pawn that, under certain conditions, can capture an opponent's one diagonally.

Equality/equalize:

A position in which both players have an equal chance of victory.

Evaluation/eval:

The analysis of a position.

Exchange (swap or trade):

Capturing an opponent's piece by losing one of one’s own.

Expanded Center:

The sixteen squares in the center of the chessboard.

FAN:

The acronym for *Figurine Algebraic Notation*, a particular type of notation.

FEN:

The acronym for *Forsyth-Edwards Notation*, a particular type of notation.

Fianchetto (little flank):

The placement of a bishop on *b2*- or *g2*-square for White and *b7*- or *g7*-square for Black to control a long diagonal.

FIDE:

The French acronym for *World Chess Federation*, the highest governing body in the chess world.

Fifty-move rule:

The rule that provides for a draw request if neither capture nor a pawn move has occurred by both sides in the last fifty moves.

File (vertical line):

A line of vertical squares.

First-move advantage:

About White to indicate the advantage in moving first.

Fivefold repetition rule:

The rule that provides for a draw if the same move is repeated five times, not even consecutively, by a player.

Flag:

One of the two smallest hands of an analog chess clock showing the expiration of time available to a player.

Flag-fall:

The expiration of time available for a player to move.

Flank/wing (chessboard)**:**

The left side (queenside) identified by the *a*-, *b*-, *c*-files or the right side (kingside) identified by the *f*-, *g*-, *h*-files.

Flight/escape square:

A square where a piece (generally the king) can move to escape an attack.

Forced:

A obliged move or combination that leads to an expected and inevitable result.

Forfeit:

A defeat resulting from the violation of the rules.

Fork:

A piece that simultaneously attacks two or more opponent's pieces.

Fortress:

A technique used in endgames to draw, in which the player at a disadvantage creates an unassailable defensive zone around his king.

Full move:

A turn by both players, i.e., a move by White and a move by Black.

Gambit:

Sacrificing a pawn in the opening phase to favor the development of one's pieces.

Good Bishop:

A bishop that is not hindered in movement by pawns of its color.

Grandmaster (GM):

The most important title awarded by FIDE, besides *world champion*.

Half-open file (semi-open file):

A file with pawns of only one player.

Hanging/en prise (*in a position to be taken* in French)**:**

About a piece when unprotected and exposed to capture by the opponent.

Hanging pawns:

Flanked and half-isolated pawns placed on adjacent and half-open files.

Hole:

A square located in a player's area of influence that a pawn cannot control (It is considered a weakness in the pawn structure and is particularly dangerous when located near the center or the king).

ICCF:

The acronym for *International Correspondence Chess Federation*.

Illegal:

An action not permitted by the regulation.

Imbalance:

Any difference between the position of White and Black at a given time of the game.

Increment:

The amount of time added to the player who moved in the game with time control.

Initiative:

The possibility of developing one's own game by hindering the opponent's one and forcing him to defend himself.

Interference/obstruction:

Sacrificing a piece to interrupt an opponent’s line of defense.

Isolated pawn:

A pawn with no friendly pawns on adjacent files.

J’adoube (*adjust* in French)**:**

The word that must be pronounced by a player before touching a piece he does not want to move to adjust its position.

Key/critical square:

A strategically important square or a square that, in pawn endings, can guarantee a certain objective if occupied by one of the two kings.

Kingside/king’s side/king’s wing:

The half of the chessboard on which the two kings are placed at the beginning of the game.

Legal:

An action permitted by the regulation.

Light-square bishop:

A bishop moving on the light or white squares.

Line:

A succession of squares or sequence of moves considered by a player or an open path for a line piece.

Long diagonal:

One of the two longest diagonals of the chessboard (*a1-h8* or *h1-a8*).

Long-range/line pieces:

The queen, rook, and bishop.

Loose:

About a piece or a position when they are vulnerable to the opponent’s attacks.

Majority:

A greater number of one player's pawns than that of the opponent on one side of the chessboard.

Major pieces/heavy pieces:

The queen and rook.

Material:

All the pieces present on the chessboard in the two deployments at a given time of the game.

Mating attack:

An attack aimed to checkmate the opponent's king.

Mating net:
A position or series of moves that force checkmate.
Middlegame:
The phase of the game following the initial one and preceding the final one.
Minor pieces:
The bishop and knight.
Minority:
A lesser number of one player's pawns than that of the opponent on one side of the chessboard.
Mobility:
The greater or lesser capability of a piece to move on the chessboard depending on the position of all other pieces.
Move/half-move:
A turn of a player, i.e., a move of White or Black.
Move order:
An orderly sequence of moves.
Norm:
The score a player must achieve in an international tournament to obtain a specific FIDE title.
Notation:
A system for recording the moves of a game.
Occupation:
About a line when a long-range piece controls it. About a square when a piece is placed on it.
Open file:
A file cleared of pawns.
Open game:
A position in which there are many open files and diagonals, and few pawns in the center.
Opening:
The initial phase of the game or a series of initial moves.
Opening repertoire:
A series of openings normally used by a player.
Opposite castling:
When a player performs the kingside castling and the other the queenside castling.

Opposition:

Generally, a position in which the two kings are separated by a single square.

Outpost:

An advanced square that is not controlled by an opponent's pawn where a player can place a piece to launch an attack, generally using a knight.

Overextension:

A position where a player has unprotected advanced pawns (overextended).

Overloading/overworking:

Forcing an opponent's piece to perform multiple defensive tasks simultaneously.

Passed pawn (passer):

A pawn that cannot be hindered by enemy pawns towards promotion.

Passive/inactive:

A piece ineffective in both movement possibilities and attack capability.

Pawn chain:

A series of pawns diagonally placed on adjacent files.

Pawn islands:

More isolated pawns or more groups of pawns detached from the others.

Pawn roller:

Two connected passed pawns.

Pawn structure/skeleton:

The placement of pawns on the chessboard at a given time of the game.

Perpetual check:

Checking continuously without being able to interrupt the series.

Piece/chessman/man:

Any piece of the game or, in some cases, a non-pawn piece or, in other cases, a minor piece.

Pin:

The attack to an opponent's piece that covers a more important one.

Position:

The placement of the pieces on the chessboard at a given time of the game.

Positional play:

A strategic style of play based on improving one's position, degrading that of the opponent.

Post mortem:

Analysis of a game after its end, often with the participation of both players and occasionally with the help of spectators.

Promotion:

A pawn replaced by another piece (except the king) once it reaches the last rank.

Push:

The advancement of a pawn on a file.

Queening:

The promotion of a pawn to queen.

Queenside/queen's side/queen's wing:

The half of the chessboard on which the two queens are placed at the beginning of the game.

Rank (horizontal line):

A line of horizontal squares.

Recapture:

The elimination of an enemy piece after capturing one of one's pieces by the latter, usually at the immediately following move.

Resignation:

Granting the victory to the opponent, leaving the game.

Royal pieces:

The king and queen.

Rule of the square/square of the pawn:

The chessboard area inside which the king must position itself to reach, without the interference of other pieces, an enemy pawn that is attempting promotion.

Sacrifice:

The offer of a piece to the opponent to obtain a compensation.

Score sheet:

A paper document in which the players record the moves of a game and its result.

Seventy-five-move rule:

The rule that provides for a draw if neither capture nor a pawn move has occurred on both sides in the last seventy-five moves.

Simplification/liquidation:

A particular type of exchange of pieces.

Skewer:

The attack on an opponent's piece that covers a less important one.

Space:

The squares controlled by a player.

Stalemate:

The position in which there are no legal moves to be performed.

Starting square:

The square occupied by a piece at the beginning of the game.

Stonewall formation:

A configuration of three pawns, two of which are lateral, on the same rank, and one central, backward of a square.

Strategy:

A long-term plan for the game.

Strong:

About a square when it can be defended effectively. About a move when it is good. About a position when it has a good chance of winning. About a player when he is successful. About one side when it has a material or position advantage.

Swindle:

A stratagem by which the player in a losing position tricks the opponent, trying to obtain the victory or a draw.

Tablebase:

The databases containing all the possible developments of an endgame but only of a limited number of pieces in play.

Tactic:

A short-term plan for the game.

Time:

The amount of time a player has to think or the number of moves to achieve a certain objective.

Threat:

A plan or move that aims to damage the opponent’s position.

Threefold repetition rule:

The rule that provides for a draw request if the same move is

repeated three times, even if not consecutive, by a player.

Time control:

The time of play provided by the rules and measured by a chess clock.

Time trouble or pressure/Zeitnot (*time crisis* in German)**:**

It indicates the lack of time left to move in the game with time control.

Touch-move/touched piece rule:

The series of rules that explain how to move the pieces.

Tournament:

A competition in which several players or teams compete.

Transposition:

Reaching a certain game position with an alternative sequence of moves compared to the classic ones.

Trap:

When a player invites the opponent to make an apparently advantageous move, but that in the end, it results in a losing one.

Undermining:

The capture of a defensive opponent's piece leaving another of those enemies poorly defended or entirely defenseless.

Underpromotion:

The promotion of a pawn to a piece other than queen.

Variation:

An alternative sequence of moves or line of play.

Weak (weakness):

About a pawn or square when it cannot be defended effectively. About a player when he is not strong.

Wedge formation:

A configuration of three pawns, two of which are lateral, on the same rank, and one central, ahead of a square.

White/first player:

The player who uses the white pieces and moves first.

X-ray:

The indirect attack on an enemy piece with one or more of one’s pieces (x-ray attack) or the defense of one’s piece through one of those enemies (x-ray defense).

Zugzwang (*compulsion to move* in German)**:**

It indicates a player who, by moving, can only weaken his position or lose material.

Zwischenzug (*intermediate* or *in-between move* in German)**:**

Postponing a previously planned move to increase its effectiveness by performing an intermediate forcing one to which the opponent is obliged to respond.

Score Sheet:					
Place:			Date:		
White:			Black:		
	White	**Black**		**White**	**Black**
1			31		
2			32		
3			33		
4			34		
5			35		
6			36		
7			37		
8			38		
9			39		
10			**40**		
11			41		
12			42		
13			43		
14			44		
15			45		
16			46		
17			47		
18			48		
19			49		
20			**50**		
21			51		
22			52		
23			53		
24			54		
25			55		
26			56		
27			57		
28			58		
29			59		
30			**60**		
Result:	☐ White Won		☐ Black Won		☐ Draw

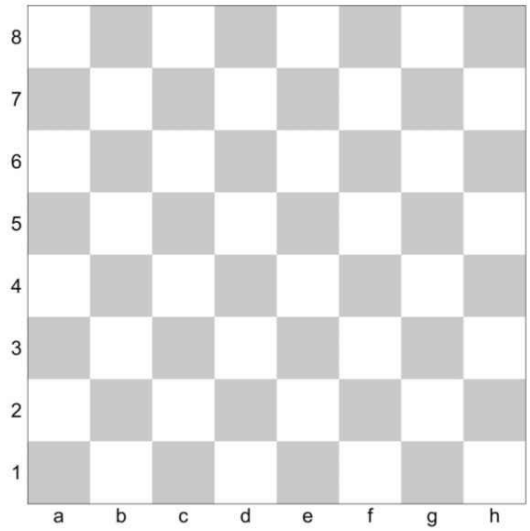


Diagram: .....

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Notes: .....

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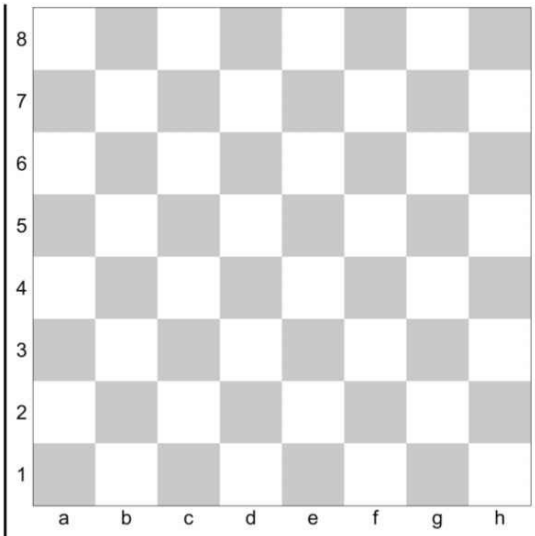

Diagram: .....

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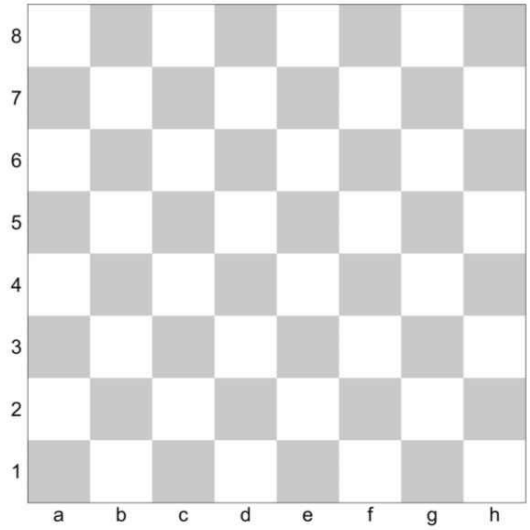

Diagram: .....

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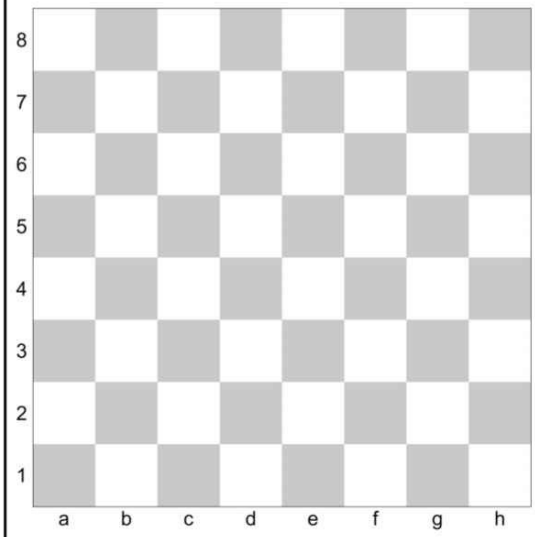

Diagram: .....

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Notes: .....

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